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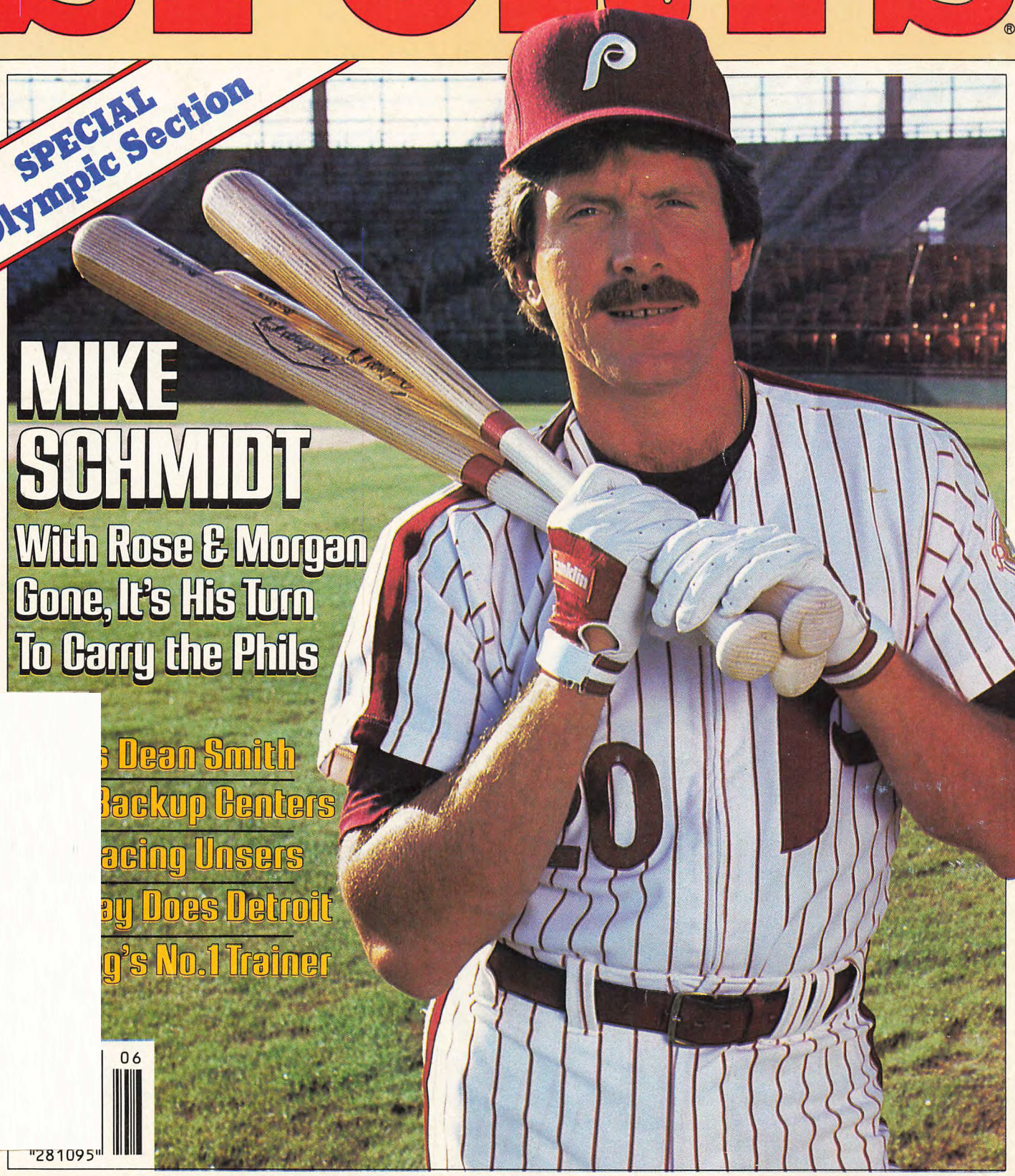

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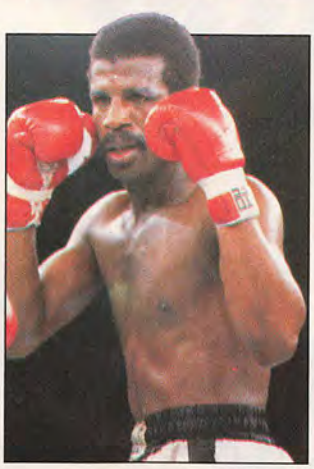

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ABC

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Mom pushed Paula [inset] out of Darryl's picture.

THE POSSIBILITIES for eventually producing a future great athlete appeared very intriguing. As intriguing, perhaps, as the chances of another married couple of pro athletes, **Ray Knight** of the Houston Astros and pro golfer **Nancy Lopez.**

But that intrigue now has melted, thanks to **Mrs. Ruby Strawberry,** mother of **Darryl Strawberry.** Young Darryl, the New York Mets' hope for the future and the National League's rookie of the year in 1983, had been engaged to **Paula McGee,** the 6'3" All-America forward on the University of Southern California women's basketball team.

Darryl, who is very close to his mother—his parents are separated—heeded her advice when she suggested he break up with Paula after his first month with the Mets, when he was hitting a paltry .161.

Mrs. Strawberry felt that Darryl was paying too much attention to Paula and not enough to his baseball. She also felt Paula was stifling Darryl's style, not letting him concentrate as much as he should on his sport.

The 6'6" Strawberry agreed . . . reluctantly. "She wanted too much at that particular time," he recalls. "I couldn't stop my career because of her. We were too young to think too high too fast."

So, the engagement was broken. But the two have remained good friends, and this past offseason, Darryl, who lives in Los Angeles, occasionally attended Southern Cal's games to watch Paula play.

With the friendship still alive, the intriguing possibility exists that they could marry someday and produce offspring of exceptional athletic ability.

CARL LEWIS, THE WORLD'S TOP-RANKED 100-meter sprinter and No. 1 long jumper, attracts a lot of attention wherever he goes—on or off the track.

But when the crowds—of photographers—begin gathering around the long jump area, like paparazzi on the Via Veneto, as he is preparing for a jump, it causes him concern.

It also can cause him to stop jumping, like it did temporarily during the U.S. Olympic Invitational in East Rutherford, N.J., this year.

The glut of photographers became so thick that some of them spilled over right into the jumping pit!

"You don't want to jump into a pit where there's a lot of people's arms and legs," said Lewis' sister, Carol, the nation's top women's long jumper. "It's scary. They [the photographers] were allowed all over the place. It's tough enough being a long jumper, or a high jumper or a pole vaulter, especially when all three events could be going on at the same time. There were too many people on the floor at the time of the field events in that meet."

Since the meet was under the auspices of the U.S. Olympic Committee, there were several USOC officials on hand to observe the difficult conditions under which the athletes had to compete. And since the USOC will have a helping hand in putting on the Olympic Games this summer in Los Angeles, it should advise the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee and the International Amateur Athletic Federation, which will be conducting the track and field events, about the necessity of keeping the competition areas clear for the athletes.

IT'S ABOUT TIME **George Steinbrenner** and **Donald Trump** learned to keep quiet and let their players' on-the-field performances speak for themselves.

Steinbrenner and Trump have developed a nasty habit of manipulating the press—specifically the New York area media, the most influential in the country.

Both unfortunately are cut from the same mold, with Trump, the owner of the New Jersey Generals, being a clone of Steinbrenner, the New York Yankees boss, who came first and still holds the upper hand over his younger adversary.

Both enjoy seeing their name in print. The bigger and bolder the headline, the more they gloat. Both have no qualms about criticizing their players, or "using" the names of players on other teams in other leagues for their own benefit. Both have developed a severe case of foot-in-mouth disease, an affliction that affects the performances of their players.

By constantly downgrading and bad-mouthing the people who work for them, Steinbrenner and Trump have managed to disgrace and humiliate them. They also have put added pressure on the players, perhaps causing them to perform below par.

It's unfair and unnecessary. Athletes don't like to be humiliated or embarrassed publicly by their bosses. Discretion should be the better part of valor in these cases.

Steinbrenner's constant harangues were the biggest factor in driving relief ace **Goose Gossage** out of New York—Gossage went about as far away as he could from his ex-boss, clear across the country to San Diego—and put several other Yankees in a rebellious mood last year. ■

By BOB RUBIN

Tony's Backup Role Doesn't Keep Him From Playing Hard

JOE AND TONY. THEY had been NBC's top baseball broadcasting team for so long, no last names were necessary. They were as close personally as they were professionally.

Then it all fell apart, most painfully for Tony Kubek, who lost a job and, at least temporarily, a friend.

Kubek's problems began last year when NBC wooed Vin Scully away from CBS. Scully is, arguably, the best baseball broadcaster in the business. So long, Tony. Scully, who demanded and got a clause in his contract that limits the number in the booth to two, was teamed with Joe Garagiola for the primary Saturday afternoon games, and Kubek was demoted to the backup games with Bob Costas. A cycle had been completed, for Kubek broke in with NBC in 1966 on the backup games.

No broadcaster knows baseball better than Kubek. The only major criticism he has ever received as an analyst is a tendency to babble on occasion.

As the song says, breaking up is hard to do. After 14 years as the No. 1 analyst, seven with Curt Gowdy and seven with Garagiola, Kubek got it in the neck, first from NBC and then from Garagiola.

Kubek felt the network acted behind his back in secrecy while it was negotiating with Scully, which hurt and angered him. "I was kept in the dark about some things," he said.

NBC Sports president Arthur Watson explained to him that secrecy was necessary because Scully was still under contract to CBS. That mollified Kubek, but only somewhat. "I still think they could have told me sooner."

But that pain was nothing compared to the falling-out with Garagiola. It was touched off by a paragraph in a *Sports Illustrated* column dealing with the baseball situation at NBC. Kubek's agent at the time was Joe Garagiola Jr., and the writer editorialized that "Kubek didn't help his cause by having Joe Garagiola Jr. as his agent."

The paragraph concluded with a Kubek quote that infuriated the senior Garagiola: "I don't think there was anything dishonest in Joe Jr.'s relationship with me, but if push came to shove, I know whose side he would have been on if one job was at stake."

Note that Kubek was speaking hypothetically. Letters to the editor from both Kubek and Garagiola Jr. in the following issue of *SI* both pointed out that their professional relationship had ended in September 1981, and therefore had no bearing on NBC's subsequent baseball decisions.

"I never, ever questioned Joe Jr.'s integrity, personally or professionally, and said so in my letter, but they didn't put that part in," said Kubek, whose opinion of *SI* changed dramatically.

Severe damage had been done. Before Kubek had a chance to talk to him, Garagiola Sr. went on a cable sports show, looked at the camera, and said, "Tony, you're lying."

As of this writing, some 10 months after the incident, the two old friends had not spoken.

Kubek wrote a letter of explanation to Garagiola Sr. ("not an apology"). He talked to Joe Jr. and says their relationship has been straightened out. "My conscience was clean once I did that."

As for patching it up with the elder Garagiola, Kubek said, "Time is probably the best healer of wounds. I understand his reaction. I'd feel the same if I thought someone had attacked my relative. The story snowballed ridiculously, with no one calling me to check if it was true. Then, before I could get to Joe Sr., he went on TV.

"I don't know how he feels now. He has seen mutual friends and they tell me he has asked about me and hoped I was doing well. Maybe I'm getting silly and stubborn, but I wrote the last letter, so it's his turn. I don't know how to handle this. It's an uncomfortable feeling. I've thought about what will happen when we go eyeball-to-eyeball. I think I'll just shake his hand and say, 'Hi, Joe, how are you doing?'"

ILLUSTRATION BY LARRY JOHNSON

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Garagiola Sr. was reluctant to talk about the episode. "Tony said what he said, and it's not as simple as him writing a letter. But I want to talk to him before I say anything publicly. It's too delicate to comment on before then. We've been good friends too long."

Does he plan to speak to Kubek?

"When I see him, sure."

Coincidentally, Kubek's contract was up at NBC the same year Scully came aboard. Had CBS bought part of the billion-dollar baseball package eventually split by ABC and NBC last spring, he probably would have jumped to Scully's old network. But CBS found the bidding too rich for its blood, and after weighing his options, Kubek re-signed with NBC last December for six years.

"I talked it over with my family and others, and the consensus was to make the best deal I could," he said. "I ate a little crow, it's true, but I've got three kids in college and the money was too good to turn down."

There's a clause in Kubek's contract that protects his dignity. He doesn't know what, if any, his role will be at the World Series this fall, but he has the right to refuse an assignment he considers demeaning. He demanded the clause after seeing Gowdy humiliated two years ago. After a long, distinguished career, Gowdy found himself with a seat in the stands interviewing celebrities.

Kubek already put his foot down once. He declined a studio role at last summer's All-Star Game in which he would have analyzed the results of a gizmo that electronically traced the route of breaking balls. It was too gimmicky for Kubek, who is strictly no-frills baseball.

"I don't like gimmicks," he said. "I take the game too seriously. I never had laughs, either as a player or a broadcaster. It's the intricacies and nuances that I love. There's almost always some little variable you never saw before. That's the fascinating part of baseball to me. I've got a computer I feed baseball data into, but the game can't be programmed."

Kubek has had the opportunity to branch out to other sports, but he refuses. For two reasons: He wants time to spend with his family, and he doesn't believe he'd have credibility with the public.

"If I got into the rat race, I wouldn't like it at all," he said. "Others thrive on it, but not me. And I think I'd be cheating the fans if I did, say, a golf tournament. Others have succeeded at branching out—Summerall, Gifford—but I still think golf fans would rather hear it coming from a golfer."

Kubek has always been a baseball purist. He was a fine shortstop for nine years with the Yankees until a neck injury ended his career prematurely at age 28 in 1965. He announced his retirement in New York, then, by sheer dumb luck, found his next career.

After the announcement, he went to Mr. Laff's, a trendy saloon on the trendy East Side, owned by Yankees infielder Phil Linz.

While there, he happened to meet an NBC employee named David Kennedy, son of the late NBA commissioner Walter Kennedy. Kennedy asked Kubek what his plans were. Kubek was unsure. He had a cheese business back in his native Wisconsin, and had received a number of offers to stay in baseball.

Coincidentally, NBC had just bought its Saturday afternoon baseball package. Kennedy told Kubek the network was looking for someone to work its backup games, and asked him to stay over an extra day to meet with the NBC brass if he was interested.

Kubek had never even thought of broadcasting. He had been the quiet type as a player, to the point of declining invitations to go on the Yankees' pregame show until ordered to do so by general manager George Weiss.

He decided to give broadcasting a shot. "What is the saying, 'necessity is the mother of invention?' I had to do something, and this came along. I just lucked out."

Suppose he had flopped? "If a jock fails, they just open up another can of jocks," Kubek said.

Ironically, it was the same hated role Gowdy played in the World Series that first focused major attention on Kubek. After three years on the backup games, he was asked to interview celebrities at the Series, following commercial breaks. Sponsors loved it because they found viewers hung around the tube to see who Kubek would come up with next instead of going to the john or for a snack.

"It had nothing to do with baseball, and if I was asked to do it now I wouldn't," he said. "In fact, I blasted NBC for degrading Gowdy."

Kubek has never been afraid to blast, and his candor, rare and refreshing in the profession, has gotten him in trouble occasionally.

There was the time he made some choice comments about Yankees owner George Steinbrenner to a Fort Lauderdale paper. Something about intimidation tactics, using the club as an expensive toy, etc.

Steinbrenner erupted. He sent letters to Commissioner Bowie Kuhn, to other owners, and to NBC, claiming Kubek was biting the hand that feeds him. He tried unsuccessfully to get Kubek fired.

"I spoke to the commissioner," Kubek said. "He said, 'Now you know what I have to put up with with these loony owners.' I really appreciated his support, because I've been critical of him in the past. He's a management guy, and I'm basically pro-union."

Kubek discussed the episode with Yankees broadcaster Bill White, who told him Steinbrenner would do one of two things when they next met: either ignore him, or pretend nothing happened.

Steinbrenner took route B. "Next time I saw him, he came over, put his arm around me, and said, 'Tony! How are you doing?'

"He's got to be the block bully. If you kow-tow to him and he thinks he has you under his thumb, he thinks, 'Well, I've got another one.' If you don't kow-tow, he's your long-lost buddy."

There was the fallout from the infamous Bert Campaneris bat-throwing episode in the 1972 playoffs. Campaneris, star shortstop of the A's, threw his bat at Tigers pitcher Lerrin LaGrow after LaGrow just missed him with the first pitch and hit him with the second.

While not agreeing with Campaneris' violent retaliation, Kubek said LaGrow had been throwing at the shortstop. The people of Detroit went bonkers at what they took to be Kubek's pro-A's stand, and put heat on Chrysler, a local company and one of NBC's leading sponsors.

Another talk with the commissioner. Another huddle with NBC brass. To his then-boss Chet Simmons, Kubek explained that he knew LaGrow had been throwing at Campaneris because he had been told by Tigers manager Billy Martin the night before that he had ordered his pitchers to try to intimidate Campaneris, who had been running wild on the bases.

NBC again backed Kubek. At a network party before the '72 World Series, an advertising type from Chrysler came up to Kubek and launched into a tirade over the episode. Julian Goodman, then-NBC president, overheard it and cut the ad man short.

"Listen, there are other car companies in Detroit," Goodman said. "Our broadcasters don't have to take that kind of abuse."

Three years ago, when the players went out on strike, Kubek was asked to make a comment. He went on the air and said, "The owners hired a union buster in Ray Grebey, so they got what they wanted."

That's all Kubek had time to say. The plug was pulled after 15 seconds, and Kubek wasn't used at all after the strike ended.

"There was pressure put on by the owners, I'm sure," he said. "I'm not blaming NBC. I'm sure they were afraid if I aired my views it might affect their chances of getting the baseball package again. It was a business decision I can understand."

But no one was going to muzzle Kubek. Two years ago, he was dismayed to learn NBC was going to run a pregame feature in which a San Diego doctor claimed 90% of all baseball players use cocaine. When he couldn't talk his superiors out of going with

it, he said on the air that he didn't think it was accurate. Then he put Marvin Miller, head of the players' union, on the air, and Miller blasted NBC and threatened a lawsuit.

So Kubek has bitten the hand that feeds him, but when he did, the hand deserved it.

Now he's a backup, no longer on center stage, but it doesn't bother him as much as it would men with bigger egos. He's still handsomely paid, he works 45 to 50 Toronto Blue Jays games for Canadian TV, and he greatly enjoys working with Costas. He's still close to the game that has gripped him since he was a boy.

"Costas has been very stimulating for me," he said. "He's so inquisitive and he may have a photographic memory. He comes in with a satchel full of books and data and grills me. I'd say he drives me crazy, but I love it. He keeps me on my toes."

No broadcaster knows baseball better than Kubek. The only major criticism he has ever received as an analyst is a tendency to babble on occasion. But when he does, it's his enthusiasm overwhelming him.

"I'm just a baseball guy, not an entertainer or celebrity," he said.

Humility and a healthy perspective about himself and his career are other endearing Kubek qualities rare in his profession. He grew up poor in Milwaukee and can remember picking up food from welfare when his father was unemployed. Twelve family members slept in a one-bedroom house.

But he doesn't like talking about it. "I get so tired of hearing guys talk about what they overcame. It's so pretentious."

Though now wealthy and famous, Kubek still isn't terribly impressed with himself.

He helps coach the freshman basketball team at Fox Valley Lutheran High School in his hometown of Appleton, Wis. (pop. 60,000). "My big ambition in life is to teach and coach a high school basketball team to a state championship," Kubek said. "One of my big regrets is that I didn't get my college degree, and I've inquired what it would take to get it now and be qualified to teach.

"I've always admired teachers and I've always had a rapport with kids. With so many parents working these days, I think teachers have almost as profound an influence on kids as the parents themselves. Teachers contribute so much more to society than I do. I know it sounds goody-goody, but that's how I feel."

It doesn't sound goody-goody. It sounds like a man who, despite some recent hard knocks, has his act together. ■

Contributing editor BOB RUBIN *would be more than happy to play any role, no matter how demeaning, at the World Series: say, holding the commissioner's overcoat or even nabbing Morganna Roberts.*

If you're a friend of Jack Daniel's, let us hear from you.

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By JERRY IZENBERG

How Barbra B KO'd Old C.S.

IT WAS A SCAM 400 years in the making, and as every guy who ever set up a pigeon can tell you, nothing is as powerful as a hustle whose time has come. The truth is that old C. S. Howard never had a chance. His fate was sealed in the wind and waves off the Florida Coast almost four centuries before a gang of Arizona cowboys played his vanity the way Isaac Stern plays Mendelssohn. If you never heard of the late C. S. Howard then a little history is in order.

Old C. S. had started with nothing and built himself an empire of automobile distributorships along the West Coast, which had stamped him as the king of California's new money by the mid-1930s. The smell of gasoline and the purr of luxury car engines made him a fortune, but deep down inside, what C. S. Howard cared about most was horses.

When the resident navigator of the Arizona mafia jabbed those two needles attached to his boots into Barbra B's flanks, she took off like a rocket

Howard got his start as a horseman in the 1930s when he spent $7,500 to acquire a solid but unspectacular thoroughbred from the famous Wheatley Stable. The horse, a bay colt by Hard Tack out of Swing On, had run mostly in minor stakes. His name was Sea Biscuit. It was Howard's racing philosophy that idle fetlocks are the devil's tool. Consequently, he ran Sea Biscuit out of every starting gate in the state and beyond. He ran him so often and so far from home that railbirds nicknamed the wonder horse "Marco Polo." The more he ran, the more he shockingly won. By the time he retired at age seven, he had won more than $400,000. Almost as important to Old C. S., he had gone east to Pimlico and beaten the great War Admiral by four lengths in a head-to-head, winner-take-all match race that had gripped the entire country's imagination.

Sea Biscuit was the rock upon which Howard's racing stable was founded. The Howard Ranch in Mendocino County was a showplace. Its student body was a pasture-to-pasture four-legged mint. And, Howard being Howard, there seemed to be an animal for every distance. With that philosophy in mind, Howard went out and bought himself a blazing speedball out of England named Fair Truckle, an animal that could run the short distances with terrifying effectiveness. Behind Howard was a track record of proven winners. Behind Fair Truckle was a family tree that did honor to European racing.

Old C. S. had every right to think he was king of the hill. Moreover, the chances were excellent that he had never even heard of a Spanish explorer named Cabeza de Vaca. As events subsequently developed, he would have been far better off reading his history instead of his racing form.

Which brings us full circle to Cabeza de Vaca during a long-gone time in history when the world was a lot younger, Spain was a lot stronger, and the horse was clearly a tourist in the Western Hemisphere. It was the horse that gave the Spanish conquistadores the big edge in Latin America, and Senor de Vaca was importing another shipment of them when the charter vessel was nailed by a killer storm off the coast of Florida and sank on the coastal rocks. Before it did, the whole cargo of horses swam ashore.

They ran wild after that . . . breeding, weeding out the weakest of their numbers by attrition, and constantly migrating. They became the progenitors of a strain of horseflesh that American cowboys refer to as quarter horses. These are the same animals that work the range, make fortunes for calf ropers in the rodeo ring, and in their most glamorous setting, earn fortunes in places like New Mexico where all the races are at a distance of 400 yards—a slice of real estate they can cover with an acceleration that boggles the mind. They are bred for that distance, they come out of the gate with all the restraint of an irritated cobra, and non-

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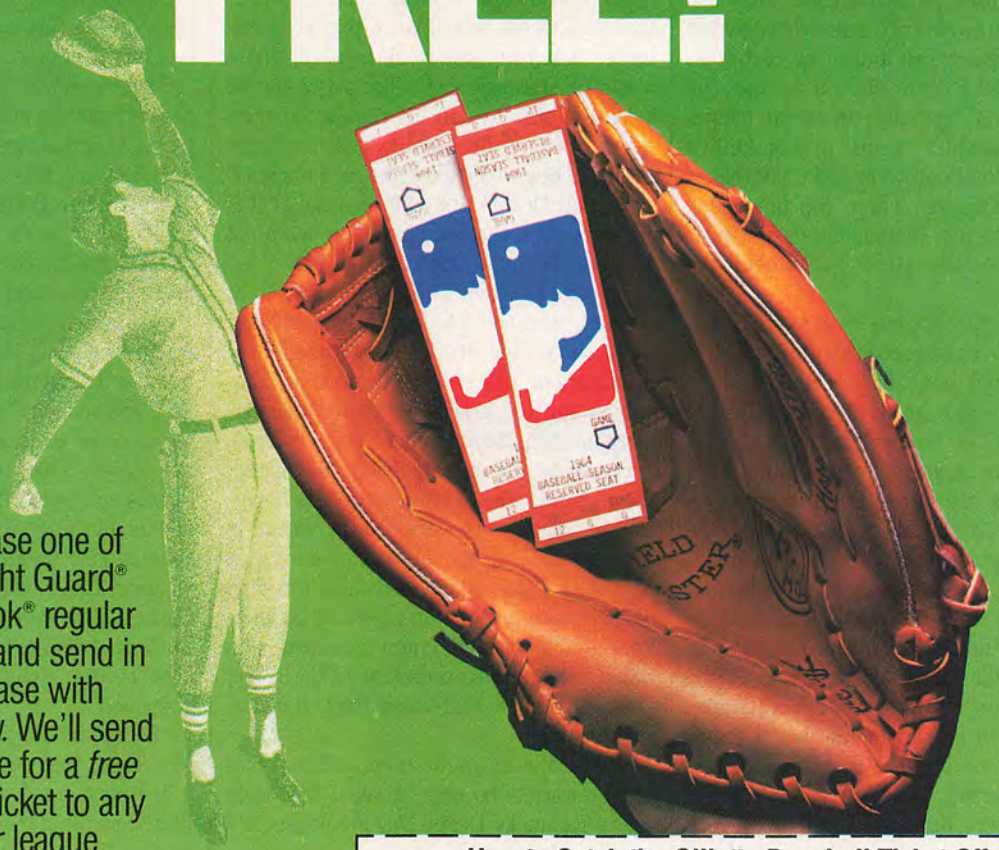

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quarter horses who race against them at that distance are generally bankrolled by people who do not like money. Quarter horses have run 400 yards in less than 20 seconds.

They have, of course, their own racing circuit and their own kind of prestige these days. But back in the years immediately following World War II they were mostly prized by cowboys and mostly seen by rural America. Which brings us to the unofficial Arizona mafia.

They were the coolest gang of operators who ever hustled a bet, and history is all the poorer for not having recorded their names. Their legs were bowed and their cheeks were tanned and they had honest-to-God spurs that jingled, jangled, jingled. They also were the sole owners of a somewhat ugly bag of greased horseflesh known as Barbra B. They ran her at fairs and on off-size dirt tracks and, occasionally, in those hyphenated make-shift racing plants known throughout the Southwest and California as the bullring tracks, where the horseflesh was so scarce that thoroughbreds and quarter horses were often thrown together in the same races.

Somehow the Arizona mob learned that one of the thoroughbreds that Barbra B had destroyed had once done rather well in happier times against the same Fair Truckle with whom C. S. Howard had fallen in love. And if you can't figure out where this story is headed, then you simply aren't trying.

Armed with the above knowledge, the cowboys decided to hold a little meeting. The place they elected to hold it was in front of Box 47 at Hollywood Park. There, in the final days of the 1947 fall meeting, roughly 10 feet from where C. S. Howard was soaking up a little sun and watching his horses run, they began to talk about the fact that Sea Biscuit had to be one of history's most overrated horses. They spoke in the kind of stage whispers designed to shatter every stained glass window in the real Notre Dame.

C. S. Howard began to do a slow burn and it wasn't from the sunshine. When he heard them refer to Fair Truckle as a plow horse, he turned medium rare. By the time an alert usher had offered to evict the hecklers, C. S. had turned charcoal gray. Then they dangled the bait.

"I reckon that old Barbra B's dust would choke him to death," one of the hustlers said.

"For how much?" C. S. Howard shot back—although he didn't know whether Barbra B was a mongoose or a Cadillac. "Put up or shut up," he snapped at them.

"Waal," the guy drawled back like a man watching a mouse approach the trap, "I reckon we could get together, say, 50."

"Fifty what?" C. S. snorted, smiling at the cronies in his private box.

C.S.'s philosophy was that idle fetlocks are the devil's tool.

"Why $50,000," the man in the Stetson said, and suddenly, it was no longer a game.

If C. S. Howard was intensely loyal to his animals, he was no less loyal to his wallet. Upon finding out that Barbra B was a quarter horse, he set the following ground rules. They would race at 440 yards instead of 400. (This was no edge. Ironically, in 1973, quarter-horse tracks would go to that very distance.) A starting gate would be used. There would be stewards and a film patrol and he would be able to use his regular contract rider, Johnny Longden. The cowboys agreed. They would have matched Barbra B against Al Unser's Indy 500 Special at that distance. At the same time, they were not without a few hole cards of their own.

The site would be Hollywood Park. C. S. Howard, who had a little to say about what went on at that track, went to see the management that very afternoon and arranged for the track's exclusive use the morning after the meeting closed. Under no circumstances was the public to be invited. "Waal, sure," the cowboys agreed, immediately tipping off every sports writer in southern California, in hopes that once they printed the story the possibilities for additional man-to-pigeon betting would be limitless. A man named Jimmy Stewart, who would later be vice president of the track, was assigned by Hollywood Park to supervise the affair.

The next voice you will hear will be that of Mr. Stewart, who once recalled this scam over a Kentucky Derby Day breakfast for a curious sports writer.

"The first thing that happened was that we all went out to see Barbra B work one morning and right away we knew that Mr. Howard had bought himself a ton of trouble. The second thing was that we began reading about the match race in the local papers, and suddenly I began to get the feeling that before this thing was over, half of southern California was going to be involved in it.

"On the day of the race, I had a money truck parked in the infield with the stakes, but it got to be a lot more complicated than that. More than 5,000 people rushed the gates that morning, and every time I looked up, there were those big old cowboys circulating through the grandstand taking man-to-man bets. I couldn't even begin to guess how much money changed hands that day.

"But there is one thing I can tell you. I looked at those cowboys and I looked at the hustlers they were betting against in the crowd, and I looked at the set of C. S. Howard's jaw, and I remember very well that I said to myself as I looked to the sky:

"'Lord, I am a young man and I would like nothing better than to be able to live long enough to be an old man. Please, Lord, do whatever you want, but don't give us a photo finish today.'"

The cowboys themselves had taken a few steps to guard against that possibility. The first was the placing of the starting gate smack on the starting line instead of a jump or so behind it. That took away any breathing room Fair Truckle might have had and made it a scrupulously standing start, designed to favor the blinding acceleration that is genetic to a quarter horse.

The second was a little more obvious to Stewart and the people who worked for the track. Longden, wearing the racing silks of C. S. Howard, was about to climb aboard Fair Truckle when Barbra B appeared. Stewart recalled her as "a kind of stringy-looking animal." His memory of her jockey was a lot less complimentary. He knew him all right. He had been barred from most American tracks (including Hollywood Park) and now he was riding mostly in Mexico and in assorted semipro "outlaw tracks." And here we come to an area that C. S. Howard had never even considered. In setting the rules, he was so obsessed with the horses that he had totally forgotten somebody was going to have to ride them. Barbra B's jockey was wearing the longest set of spurs Jimmy Stewart had ever seen. They looked like Madame LaFarge's knitting needles. C. S. blew his top. "Get the damned rules," he screamed.

"Forget it," he was advised. "You wrote 'em. You never said word one about spurs."

It wasn't much of a race. Incredibly, as they shot out of the gate, Fair Truckle broke on top. Then the resident navigator of the Arizona mafia jabbed those two needles attached to his boots squarely into Barbra B's flanks. Forget it, C. S. Howard. She took off like a rocket.

C. S. Howard would have done better to simply burn the money. He never had a chance. "Barbra B ran away and hid," Jim Stewart recalled. "She won it by two lengths. The photo-finish camera was never a factor. We paid off at the money truck, the crowd paid off in the grandstand, and nobody was killed."

Clearly, those factors are not necessarily listed in order of importance. ■

Contributing editor JERRY IZENBERG *earned his doctorate in scamology, and has become an expert on the life cycles of all scams found in the Western Hemisphere.*

'My job is easy compared to someone teaching freshman English.'

able. I mean, very seldom do I go into a restaurant in Chapel Hill and somebody comes up and wants an autograph or something like that. I think in Chapel Hill I'm much the same as any other professor. It's when you get outside of Chapel Hill—it becomes just like it is for a player. I don't see how a player can go to the beach and not be recognized. That comes with television. There's a lot of nice things in having a winning program, but also ask Jimmy [Valvano] about the difference now in his time. The letters, all the things you're asked to do.

IS: How do you deal with being a public figure and trying to be a private person?

DS: I don't let it bother me. I'm cordial if somebody interrupts and wants an autograph or something. I do everything I want to do, probably with the exception of taking the kids to the state fair over the years. Not that I really want to do that that much. [Chuckles]. Other than that I live a pretty normal life.

IS: You mention Jim Valvano and how success has probably been an eye-opener for him. He has come under some criticism for the amount of commercial endeavors that he's gotten involved in since winning the national title a year ago. Yet you have not done that. Why?

DS: Coaches have to decide for themselves. I don't think anybody who does [pursue commercial opportunities] is wrong necessarily. Because coaches are considered professional. When Bill Dooley was the football coach here he did an ad for a clothing store and a few other things. Ara Parseghian at Notre Dame did a big thing for Ford, wasn't it? That's nationally. Digger [Phelps] is doing something nationally. To each his own on that. I just chose not to go that route.

IS: You seem to feel more comfortable speaking out on social issues like integration, the Vietnam War, and the nuclear freeze.

DS: It's something we do as a group in our church. You're supposed to be, quote, the church in the world, but you notice I don't ever say coach Dean Smith. I'm allowed as Mister Dean Smith to have some thoughts on these issues. If people think I can help their cause, and I believe in the cause, then I don't see anything wrong with that.

IS: Does the fact that a coach is a prominent public figure in this state bring with it a certain social responsibility?

DS: Let's see. At the small church of which I am a member, we have many people in politics. We're supposed to get strength from one another to go out into the world to be the church in the world. If that means saying what you think about man's inhumanity to man, speaking out—yes, you can do that even through your job. You say, there's more interest in a basketball coach or a basketball player. Well, then, go ahead and speak and hope it might help. Maybe somebody won't get killed. If I could do anything about stopping the war over there in Lebanon I would do it. But I can't. It doesn't mean I'm more of an authority [than other laymen], although I will study anything on a social issue very carefully before I make a decision to help out. I don't want to get caught in something. I want to be sure I believe in what I'm saying.

IS: As someone who is concerned about society, having coached athletes all this time, what contribution does that make to society?

DS: I've asked myself that question several times . . . I think the hardest thing for the young men I coach is to be really good. I mean, they're great players. And then to somehow put that into perspective: What can I do to help others? To find a vocation that I enjoy doing and I do well? Fortunately, most of them have done extremely well with that tension. And it's crazy to say, but the top players are really not better off. They really have to fight a lot of things. [It's like] the sudden success of a movie star. You've got to keep your head about you. So I think, is this really important? I like being in a university setting, and I think universities are important to society. I like working with young men. My job is easy as opposed to someone who is teaching a freshman English course. [Players] have to take freshman English. They choose to take intercollegiate basketball. They enjoy it. So the motivation principle isn't quite as great as it would be for somebody who has to teach a course that isn't an elective. That would be much harder. The teaching benefits in athletics, the values inherent in competitive athletics somehow can help the majority. It sounds trite to say that. I always said to myself that if I really believe what I'm saying I should be coaching in junior high. This is where young men really start out. Then again, I have to admit I like the excitement of Division I college basketball.

IS: In some ways, you picked a more difficult task, because the players you deal with have all been stars in high school. Isn't one of the first things you have to teach them to subjugate their egos for the good of the whole?

DS: That's always a job for a coach in basketball, because there are five people who can play, there are 12 people on a team. It's a nice thing they've done now in football—the specialty teams. It's like our old Blue team. They come in for three or four plays. I think the Texas A&M experiment was interesting when they called out the student body for walk-ons for the kickoff team. They all fought to be on that eleven. I did read where they got the opposing guy on the 18 the first time they did it. These are all non-athletic, non-recruited guys going down on a kickoff. Of course, if he'd run it back [for a touchdown], I'll bet that would be the last time they'd do it. [Chuckles].

IS: You said once that the kids playing at this level are "driven" in some ways. Can you elaborate on that?

DS: When I say driven to be at this level, this is almost world-class level—say your top 80 teams in Division I. Of all the people in this world playing basketball, to be able to play this well you had to spend many, many hours practicing. Maybe a Sampson wouldn't have, but he did spend many hours. But maybe he

could have been at this level without the practice. With that in mind, to have had that self-discipline to practice those hours and hours and hours. Now, what drove them, I don't know. There are different motivations. They have to have been driven. If they'd spent that many hours at piano lessons they might be concert pianists. If they'd spent that many hours in a library, you name it, they would be good at it. Juggling. Our game is not one like, say, football. If you have great size, speed, and strength, don't mind getting hit or hitting somebody, and have never seen a football game—in a year or two you have a chance to play college football. But basketball, with the skills involved, usually requires years of experience.

IS: When you recruit, are you looking for a specific type of person or do you recruit for position?

DS: We kind of look at our needs. But let's say we had a couple of guys really good at 6'11". When Sampson calls and says he wants to come, then what do you say? There is that problem in intercollegiate athletics, where you just can't tell the guy no. We won't seek somebody if we think our position is in good shape. First, can he play? Then you start looking at the intangibles, which are, number one, his class record, his schoolwork. Otherwise, if Eddie [Fogler] or Bill [Guthridge] spot—I don't go—if they spot somebody at one of the summer camps, then coach Fogler will usually call the coach first and ask him about the player's grades and what kind of young man he is, and that's where we begin. And then, of course, in the recruiting process we like to know what his teammates think of him, what a faculty member might think of him. We are in a more selective situation. We can afford to be now. And yet, with everybody you look at, there's someone just as good. One year recently we had three players all the same size wanting to come. We knew the two who didn't come would be playing against us in the conference. And we had a hard time saying which was the best of the three. I mean, we studied. You can't project ahead two years time. Since they're current, I don't want to say their names, but a better example is John Kuester and Billy Langloh. Langloh was going to go to Virginia or Duke if he didn't come here. And, sure enough, at Virginia, Langloh had one great game against us and beat us. There wasn't that much difference [between them] coming out of high school. You do try to study the intangibles. John Kuester was what we call a gym rat, and he was in playing all the time and was so gung-ho. And Billy probably didn't like basketball as much as John, but he liked it. Sometimes you guess wrong on those, sometimes you guess right. Of course I'm happy we had John Kuester.

IS: When you are looking at those intangi-

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bles, how important is it to know that a player will subordinate his game for the sake of the team?

DS: You never know they'll do that for sure. If they're from a big family, they had to learn something like that. You try to guess. But once a guy gets here, he'll . . . First of all, we don't lead anybody astray in recruiting them. We almost, if anything, undersell the amount of participation we expect out of them. And that way they certainly come here with their eyes wide open. That's probably the number one factor. We say it's going to be hard to play at this level.

IS: Basically they're joining a system and a tradition.

DS: I don't like the word system, because that to me says that you cannot be an individual, and very definitely we take advantages of individual weaknesses, individual strengths on offense or on defense. And we give them the ability to react on their own. But we don't give them any green light, so to speak. We have some ideas. But certainly if a player can do something and do it well and it helps the team, we encourage it.

IS: Does any one change in the game over the years stand out in your mind?

DS: The biggest thing that's changed is the skill levels. It's unreal, the difference. Go look at an old film sometime. Players do spend more time at it. It used to be, everybody played football, basketball, baseball. Now they play basketball year round. They're stronger, faster, better skilled. In the NBA guide, one of the great players, you look and he shot 25%—field goal attempts. You know, maybe the highest in the NBA we used to see in the '50s was something like 37%. They learned something more about shot selection, what is good and what isn't. The mental breakthrough is the next thing. How can you ever get a first team playing like your second five does in practice, with relaxation in shooting? Then you'd really have something. We have the Blue team pretending—we don't do this very much anymore, but we used to—that they're the other team. My gosh, they'd make everything. Because nobody was paying attention to them, they were just having fun. Then if you could get them to play that loose shooting the ball and more aggressive like the first group does in a big game, then you have something. I have no ideas how to bring that about.

IS: You helped convince James Worthy to go pro in 1982 after his junior year, and you acted as a sort of intermediary for him. What do you think of the rule that a student-athlete cannot talk to an agent?

DS: That's a self-serving rule for the NBA. A student-athlete can't get a lawyer. By rule, they aren't allowed to dicker, and that's the Sampson rule because they kept coming in and offering Ralph money to go pro. The NBA's thrilled with the rule, because a player really has some leverage if he says, 'OK, I'm going to stay in school unless I get such and such money.' Yeah, I'd like to see that rule changed. The only way it could be changed—and the NBA isn't going to change it—would be if the NCAA said, fine, you may talk to a team, and as long as you don't sign, you're eligible. That would be interesting. That's another thing down the line.

'I don't like the word system, because that to me says you cannot be an individual.'

IS: In light of Bobby Knight's imbroglio at the Pan-Am Games in Puerto Rico, and his on-court demeanor in general, do you think he's a good choice as head coach of a team representing the United States?

DS: I have confidence that Bob will represent the United States and represent it well. As to court demeanor, he usually sits there rather quietly. I was in on the group that was selecting an Olympic coach. You have newspaper reports, but then we got the true report from Bill Wall, ABAUSA [Amateur Basketball Association USA], from witnesses on both sides, and it did not make Bob look like it came out in the media. He's intelligent, and I'm sure he recognizes his responsibility. Certainly he's an outstanding coach and I think will do well.

IS: Should the players on the Olympic team be picked to fit the coach's style, or should they just be the best players?

DS: They have to fit the coach. If we're going to play a zone and ball control, well, then you look for a different style of player. You want to press people, full-court zone press, you look for quick athletes. The coach really has to be the guy. It's good that, more and more, we're giving more autonomy once the coaches get to the Trials. Like at the Pan-American Games, we didn't meet as a selection committee. Yes, we did. One time. But in the final analysis it was Jack Hartman and his six coaches who made the decision. And that's the way it should be, because Jack's the one who's totally responsible. I can't imagine it, but they tell me that on some pro teams the general manager makes the decision on players. I just can't believe that. I can't imagine someone choosing the players, although I did have a couple given me [for the 1976 Pan-Am Games] and I would have preferred two others. Still, I was happy to get 10 of the players I wanted.

IS: On the subject of great players, Jeff Mullins said that the two best guards he ever faced were Jerry West and Oscar Robertson, and the only player he's seen since his playing days who's capable of being that good is Michael Jordan. Do you think that Michael Jordan has the potential to be as good as any player you've ever had?

DS: Yeah. I just don't want to get caught in saying this guy is better than this guy. But I've said, if Michael Jordan keeps his rate of improvement going, I don't see how anybody can touch him, period. He's an athlete. He's smart. He competes. And he has skills. He's working on his passing and dribbling skills now. He'll be very good at that. He's getting better and better.

IS: Didn't you have him working on his ballhandling last summer?

DS: Yes, and he's getting better and better. I don't think he'll be a point guard, although he could be someday. His big improvement to me was between his freshman and sophomore years. He just got more confidence playing so well against Georgetown [in the 1982 NCAA final]. That was by far his best game. Forget the last shot. That was by far his best rate-out game his freshman year. He had streaks in there when he played well, but never consistently. And he's better this year than he was last year. So's Sam [Perkins]. He isn't quite as flashy getting the job done. He quietly goes about getting rebounds, scoring, setting screens, getting inside on the board position. He's improved his rebounding a lot.

IS: Do you think at all about retiring?

DS: No. I don't want to say whether it will be next year or at [age] 60 or 55 or 65. You have to get out at 65. That gives me 13 more seasons, I guess. But I don't know if I'd take it.

IS: What would you do if you retired from coaching?

DS: I don't know. I'd have to do something. I'd have to stay busy. There are some people who can retire. My interests aren't that varied, which is unfortunate for me. I wouldn't enjoy going over and traveling in Europe. I've been to Europe so much. I go on one tour, but I'll never go back. Maybe the Sistine Chapel; I liked that one. But other than that, I don't think I'd go see another church, another castle. I'm just not interested in that. So I don't know. I'm not even going to think about it. I'm not going to worry about it. ■

BARRY JACOBS *is a free-lance writer whose work has appeared in numerous national publications. Unlike Smith, Barry cares how this story reads in Peoria.*

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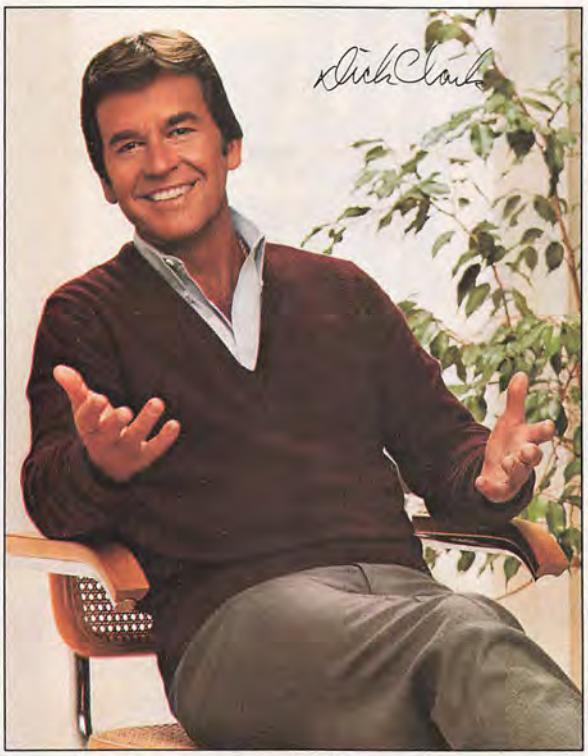

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The Weight Of Philly Is On His Shoulders

With Rose and Morgan gone, Mike Schmidt must lead, amid boos and cries of 'choker'

By BILL FLEISCHMAN

MIKE SCHMIDT SUDDENLY stood up in the Philadelphia Phillies clubhouse and shifted into his familiar batting stance, minus a bat . . . hands held high, butt thrust south. Facing a pitcher only he saw, Schmidt said, "I want kids to wiggle their rear ends a little, like I do, and say, 'Does this look like Mike Schmidt?'"

Schmidt, who has led the major leagues in home runs six seasons and has hit more home runs (370) in the last decade than any other player, had been discussing his image and how youngsters imitate professional athletes. "When my little boy, Jonathan, is 10, 11, or 12," Schmidt said, "and we're playing catch in the yard and he starts to act like somebody, saying, 'This is the way Pete Rose does it,' I want a kid to be like me. And if he's gonna want to be like me, I want me to be a good guy to be like."

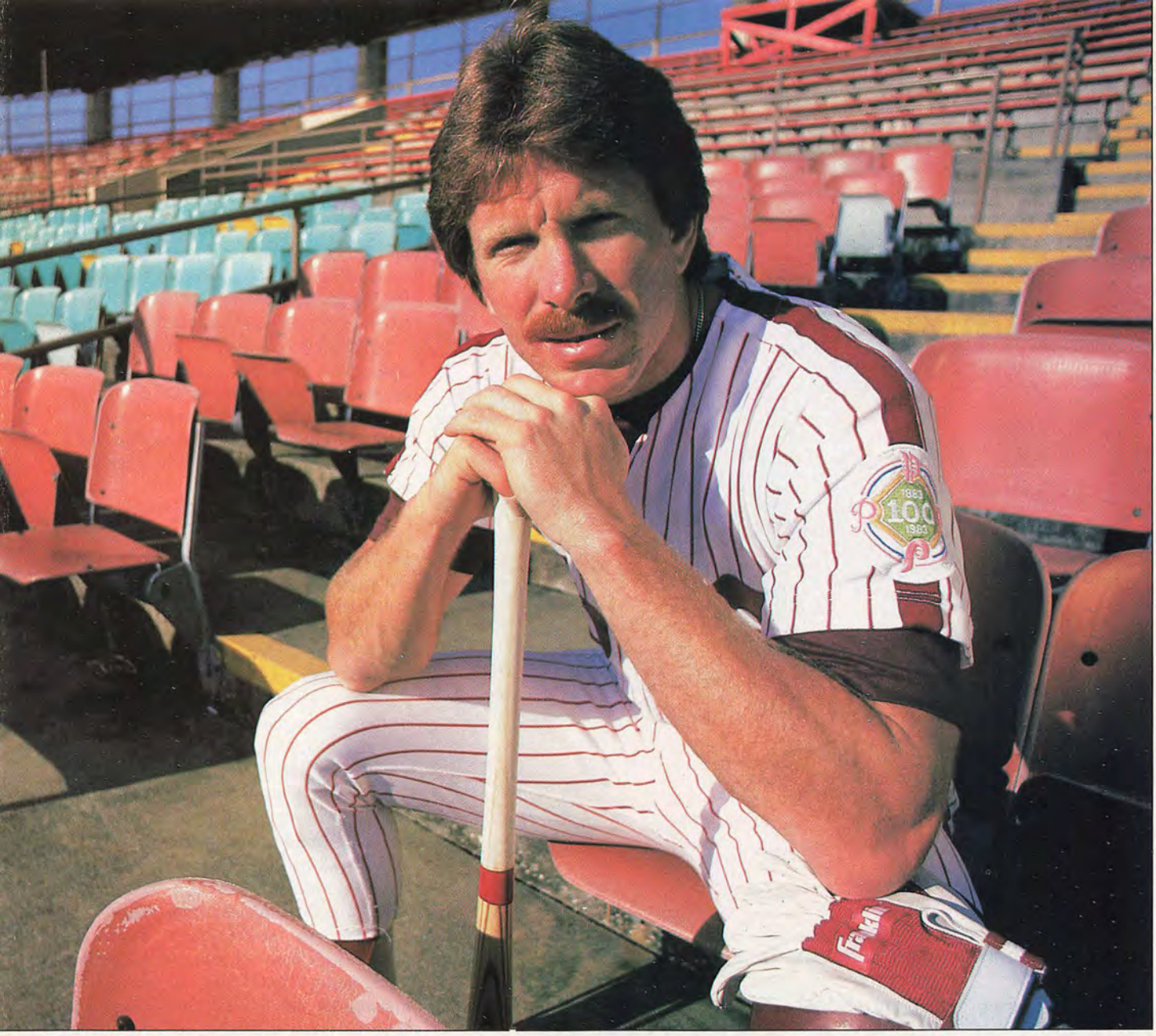
That sentence might need repeating before it sinks in, but Schmidt is sincere about his image. "One of my goals in life is to be a good example. As much as kids today emulate rock stars and movie stars and, in some cases, politicians, but in most cases professional athletes, the most important thing I can be—more so than a home run leader, an RBI leader, is a darn clean liver. Take any flamboyance or success I might have on the baseball field and back it up so people can say, 'This guy's a good guy, he's a family man. He knows how to love, how to care for people, how to be humble. That's just about the most I can do in return for the blessings I have—the health, the position I have in life, the financial security."

Mike Schmidt thinks about how people perceive him. He says he's an introvert, but he's also introspective—perhaps as much as any major-leaguer. It hurts this two-time most valuable player, one of only four National League players ever to win the MVP award in consecutive years, when he recalls tracking his five-year-old daughter's school bus in a snowstorm last winter. When Schmidt stopped to inquire from another bus driver about the location of his daughter's bus, some junior-high-age boys recognized him. "That's Mike Schmidt! That's Mike Schmidt!" they yelled. Then, from the back of the bus, one of them yelled, "Choker!" Schmidt, a man who rarely shows emotion on the field or in the clubhouse, can't hide the pain as he retells the story.

This future Hall-of-Famer thinks about a lot of things . . . about his new role on the defending National League champions, his relationship with Philadelphia's demanding baseball fans, about the many changes the Phillies have made since they beat Kansas City in the 1980 World Series. During a lengthy interview, he also talked about his specialty—hitting. This is one subject many people, including Phillies manager Paul Owens, are convinced Schmidt thinks about too much.

"We always kid him about maybe overthinking," said the tall, lean, 60-year-old Owens. "He always talks about 'flow' and words like that. I'd kid him and say, 'Schmitty, just let it flow. You're always talking about it—just let it flow. Don't be worrying about how the guy could throw you that pitch and get you out.' But he's a perfectionist."

IF SCHMIDT, 34, LETS IT FLOW this season, he'll be gliding along without Pete Rose and Joe Morgan. After four productive seasons in Philadelphia, Rose slipped to a .245 average last season and into part-time duty. Shortly after the Phillies were abruptly excused in five games from the World Series by Baltimore, Rose



was released. The separation was soothed by a $300,000 payoff from the Phillies, which was in the fine print of the deal that had made Rose the highest-paid singles hitter in baseball history. After knocking on many doors, the still-competitive Rose took his pursuit of Ty Cobb's major league record 4,191 hits north of the border to Montreal.

Like Rose, Morgan was one of the Wheeze Kids, the over-40 set whose experience was counted upon to lead the Phillies to a championship and another parade down Broad Street. After a season-long snooze (one Philadelphia baseball writer buried Morgan in midseason by saying he was so far over the hill, he received his mail by satellite), Morgan was revived in September when his bat snapped to life and he became a significant factor in the Phillies' run to the NL pennant. However, like his buddy Rose, Morgan was also released and wound up with the Oakland A's.

A third member of Cincinnati's successful Big Red Machine, Tony Perez, was the Phillies' leading hitter early last season. But his contributions faded as the summer grew hotter, and he was given a homecoming in Cincinnati. The skills of all three former Reds have eroded, but they are expected to be missed by the Phillies—in the clubhouse, in the dugout, in hotels, and on planes, where their experience, baseball smarts, and feel for camaraderie would support younger Phillies such as Von Hayes, Bob Dernier, Juan Samuel, Len Matuszek, Charles Hudson, and Kevin Gross as they tried to fit into the flow of major league life. Since the Phillies, excluding welcome exceptions such as Rose and Tug McGraw, have never been baseball's version of "Laugh In," the absence of the tension-breaking supplied by Rose, Morgan, and Perez could turn the Phillies into a team with all the excitement of a John Glenn campaign, unless Schmidt and the other veterans press the right buttons.

Curiously, baseball, of all the major team sports, seems the least likely to require designated leaders, because of its individual-oriented nature. However, in the 1970s, the Cincinnati Reds, with Rose, Morgan, Perez, and Johnny Bench, and the Pittsburgh Pirates' "We Are Family" act, put leadership in vogue. Leaders were like Picassos—every team should have one. That's the reason the Phillies paid Rose all that money—the club had won three consecutive NL East titles but didn't advance to the World Series until Rose and his dirt-scattering, head-first slides arrived.

"I have a hunch," said Phillies president Bill Giles, "that, with Rose and Morgan gone, Schmitty might have his best year. He's going to be the leader, and he's going to have to do some things in the clubhouse and dugout, too. Rose and Morgan were kind of domineering and more outgoing than Schmitty."

"I really think he's looking forward to a year like this, where he and guys like Gary

'It becomes harder to hit when the fans are booing you.'

Matthews are going to have to be my leaders," said Owens. "When you've got fellows like Rose and Morgan, you're talking about future Hall-of-Famers. There was an image there in the '70s when they were *it*. They all had that intangible of natural leaders. Now, all of a sudden, they're gone. I think Schmitty will relax a little more and know how important he is to us. He's a great guy to work with kids."

During his 11 seasons in Philadelphia, Schmidt has often been scorned as the ultimate Mr. Cool, baseball's Iceman. When he jogs to first base after walking, or to and from his position at third, he appears to be strutting. This product of middle America, from Dayton, Ohio, doesn't intend to strut, but that's how his movement is interpreted by many. About the only time Schmidt has shed his cool look was in 1978, when he objected to Bruce Kison, then with Pittsburgh, hitting him with a pitch. The two exchanged threats as Schmidt trotted to first base. Suddenly, Schmidt swerved left toward the mound, charged Kison—and the Phillies star suffered a broken finger in the brawl. Another lesson learned.

The good news now for Owens, Giles, and the Phillies is that the leadership role appeals to Schmidt. "There's no question I have to assume more leadership," he said. "But I'm not going to be any different this year than I've ever been. I've been a leader in my own way in other years. It's just that Pete was so available to you guys [media] all the time. He enjoys talking baseball. With him here, a guy like me gets pushed down the leadership totem pole.

"When you have a Pete Rose and Joe Morgan, there is a tendency to sit back. You're kind of forced to. Those two are screaming at each other all the time, calling each other ugly. It's good-natured stuff, it keeps everybody loose. But if that's up to 'Lefty' [Steve Carlton] and me, we're gonna come in here and talk about cars, fishing, and golf. We're not one-dimensional people. Not that those guys are, but that's the impression. They live baseball 24 hours a day. When they left here, they were thinking about it. When they get up in the morning, they're thinking about it. That's great—that's where leadership comes from. [But] the guys who are here now—myself, Carlton, Maddox, McGraw, Matthews—can't say that we eat, sleep, drink, and live baseball 24 hours a day. I have a family, I'm a father, I have other interests. I dedicate myself to baseball totally throughout the time I'm required to and, once the season starts, probably as much as Pete Rose. You just wouldn't know it, because I'm not talking about it all the time. But I daydream before I go to bed about the pitcher the next day. Anytime I have a daydreaming moment during the day, I think about what the guy's going to throw me that night. Baseball is almost all of my life, but I can't say that, year-round, I'm at it like Pete is."

Rose, who called Schmidt "Herbie" because he thought Schmidt looked like a Herbie, leaves the impression that reading the page-one news is not his top priority every day. Ask Rose what he thought of the developments in Lebanon and he's likely to reply, "What league are they in?" Smiling, Schmidt said, "He'd say, 'What's going on there isn't going to make me hit .350.' When he retires from the game, it'll show whether that kind of attitude is healthy."

That Rose, Morgan, and Perez and their Cincinnati connections would figure in the Phillies' picture is intriguing because Owens and Giles have desperately tried to avoid the kind of collapse the Reds had after those three veterans stopped taking their mail at Riverfront Stadium. Although the Phillies were far over their quota of 40-year-old players, with four—no team ever played in a World Series with as many 40-year-olds as Philadelphia did last October—Giles and Owens weren't keeping these guys around just to have players closer to their own ages. What the Phillies wanted to do was keep a winning team—which also means happy turnstiles at Veterans Stadium—while phasing in younger players.

"We wanted to stay away from what happened to Cincinnati," said Owens, who ascended to the general manager's chair about the time Schmidt moved in as the Phillies' regular third baseman. "They said they were going to go with kids. I understood their thinking, but the last two years have proven that isn't the way to do it. They were drawing 2.4 and 2.5 million right along and had great clubs. Then, all of a sudden, they've got the worst record in baseball. Once that happens, I think you put too much pressure on the kids. Ours has been a transition period where you're dropping three or four, adding two or three, but you're keeping your nucleus. For a club to compete in our league, I think you need a combination of experience and youth."

The Phillies started dropping and adding after they won the 1980 World Series. Excluding pitchers, Schmidt and Garry Maddox are the only surviving starters from 1980. Following the World Series celebration four years ago, left fielder Matthews was acquired from Atlanta for pitcher Bob Walk. Greg Luzinski was then sold to one of his hometown teams, the Chicago White Sox. After the strike-interrupted 1981 season, popular Lonnie Smith was traded for catcher Bo Diaz. Then the Phillies sold catcher Bob Boone to the California Angels. Promising hitter Keith Moreland and pitchers Dickie Noles and Dan Larson went to the Chicago Cubs for righthander Mike Krukow. A month later, the Cubs took shortstop Larry Bowa and prospect Ryne Sandberg for steady, and younger, shortstop Ivan DeJesus. One month after the Cubs trade, rightfielder Bake McBride, a valuable player on the World Series champions (.309, 9 home runs, 87 RBIs), was dealt to Cleveland for reliever Sid Monge.

The 1982 season was in its homestretch when Owens acquired righthander John Denny from Cleveland for three minor-leaguers. Denny didn't impress anybody that September, but last season, benefiting from sharing the pitching and conditioning wisdom of Steve Carlton and the muscle-massaging of Gus Hoefling, Denny won the NL Cy Young Award with a brilliant 19-6, 2.37 ERA season.

In December of '82, Owens trimmed another regular from the World Series cast when second baseman Manny Trillo was one of five players swapped to Cleveland for outfielder Von Hayes. After spring training injuries last season hindered his development, Hayes, who was promptly nicknamed "5-for-1," struggled to a .265, 6-homer, 32-RBI season.

"I don't think our fans have seen the real Von Hayes yet," said Owens. "What he went through last year was almost unbelievable: two major injuries and he didn't even play a ball game in spring training. If our people are right, he could just turn this thing around and be around a long while. He's a picture player—he can hit, run, and throw. Once he finds himself, he can be as good as he wants to be."

Even before Philadelphia fans had seen Hayes in his new red-and-white costume, they were howling and jamming the telephone lines of the radio sports-talk shows because Trillo was an excellent fielder who, unlike most Phillies, was enjoying himself in baseball. Julio Franco, the other key player in the 5-for-1 trade, had been billed by the club as a can't-miss major-leaguer. Franco substantiated those opinions by having a superb rookie season in Cleveland (.273, 8, 80), but Trillo, who was entering free-agent status, was traded by the Indians to Montreal. He's now happily cuddling a big contract with the San Francisco Giants.

Five days after dealing for Hayes, Owens made another significant trade, bringing Joe Morgan and reliever Al Holland over from the Giants. The Phillies disliked parting with Krukow (13-11, 3.12 ERA in '82), but the price had to be paid to add Morgan's experience and Holland's boldness out of the bullpen. All Holland, now affectionately known as "Mr. T," did was emerge as the league's best reliever (8-4, 2.26 ERA, 25 saves, second highest in the league). Owens also obtained Willie Hernandez (9-4, 3.28, 8 saves) from the Cubs for starter Dick Ruthven. With the effectiveness of aging Tug McGraw, 39, in doubt, Hernandez and Holland give the Phillies a strong left-handed relief punch.

Owens made two other deals last season that helped the pennant-winning cause. In May, Joe Lefebvre was pried away from San Diego for Sid Monge. Playing the outfield and also filling in at third base and catcher, the left-handed hitting Lefebvre hit .310 in 101 games for Philadelphia (.306 overall). Late in the season, Owens dialed area code 619 again for Sixto Lezcano. Serving with his fourth major league team, Lezcano hit .282 in 18 games down the stretch. The Phillies gave San Diego four prospects for Lezcano, but again, they feel it was worth the price—they reached the World Series and the farm system's cupboard is far from bare.

ALL THESE CHANGES, Schmidt believes, have been for the better. "I don't like to see my friends leave the ballclub," Schmidt said, "but I think we're a much better team now. The main improvement lies in the pitching staff. Now we have Denny, Hudson, Holland, and Hernandez. We have a different approach to the game. We're not as power-laden as we were in 1980 when we batted around a record number of times. We're more of a defensive and pitcher-oriented team."

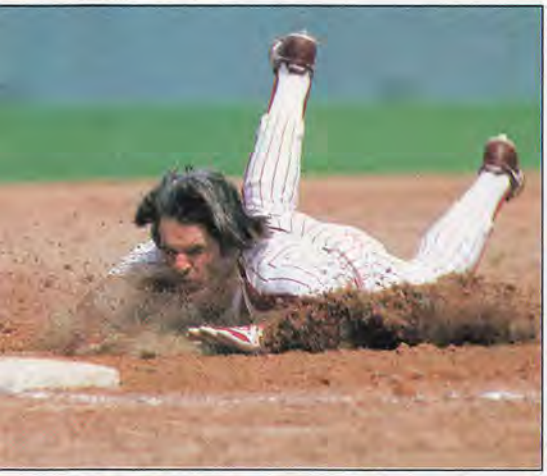
'The Orioles were just too good for me. That's hard to swallow.'

With his stylish, apparently casual approach to baseball, you'd never guess that Schmidt is the restless type. "I'm the type of guy who enjoys change," he said. "I enjoy moving the furniture around in my living room every two or three weeks. I get stale if things stay the same."

All the moves the Phillies have made have kept Schmidt from resembling week-old bread. "Sure all these changes have affected me," he said. "I'm walking a heckuva lot more than I did when Luzinski and McBride were hitting around me in the batting order. The last couple of years, we've been struggling to find some consistency in the batting order ahead of me. In 1974-75-76 [Dave] Cash and Bowa were having their greatest years. They were on base all the time for me when I was hitting third. In 1980, Pete had a great year. Now, the last couple years, we're having trouble finding a 5-hole hitter, a 3-hole hitter, a 4-hole hitter. The first two guys in

the batting order are never the same for any one month at a time. That has a direct effect on me, but I still gotta hit what they throw up there."

Paul Owens hopes his willingness to seek the advice of veterans such as Schmidt, Carlton, and Matthews will help involve them even more in the club's daily operation. "I think getting Schmitty more involved is a key to his own success," Owens said. "He's right about being a leader in his own way. When I first took over the club, I remember coming out to change pitchers. He'd come over from third base and just be standing



'With Rose and Morgan there was a tendency to sit back. But if that [leadership] is left up to "Lefty" and me, we're gonna talk about cars, fishing, and golf. We're not one-dimensional. Not that those guys are, but that's the impression. They live baseball 24 hours a day.'

there, picking up some dirt. He'd say, 'Good move.' He wouldn't even look up, but I could hear him. At first, I didn't know how to take it. But then, it showed me he was in the game.

"Sometimes we'd talk in the dugout. I'd ask him if our pitcher was losing a little, and he might say, 'A little.' From where he plays, he can see the pitcher's arm motion, the look on the guy's face. When Carlton's pitching to right-handed hitters, a lot more balls are hit down the line. He knows these things . . . it shows he's thinking."

Informed that Owens wants to involve him more, Schmidt laughed and said, "I don't think he wants to tell *me* that. I'm liable to stand next to him in the dugout [and help manage]."

Sure Owens is subtly stroking one of his stars, but beyond the management-player moat, Owens seems to genuinely like Schmidt. Owens wasn't Schmidt's biggest fan last September, however, when Schmidt ran a razor through what was left of the Phillies team photo. Owens had sprinted down from the general manager's office in mid-July after Pat Corrales was fired. Here was Owens, the "Pope," the master planner of the Phillies' success since the mid-'70s,

struggling to save what he called the best team he had ever assembled, and suddenly his best player was spreading turmoil nationwide in an interview with the Associated Press.

"We have no sense of direction," Schmidt said. "We have developed no stability, nobody is sure who the manager is." Complaining about too many players not knowing when they would start, Schmidt said, "As a veteran player on the Philadelphia Phillies, I'm disappointed in the way the front office has handled this year. We got a team full of guys who are capable of turning on a switch, and you wouldn't know it's the same ballclub two weeks later. But we've got an organization and an office and a team full of soap-opera problems that are cutting into the chances of that happening."

"I didn't intend for it to come out that way," Schmidt said early this season, sitting on a red equipment trunk in the Philadelphia clubhouse. "This reporter started talking to me about my Christianity, and then we wound up talking about the team. But it worked out for the best because I explained to the nation why a lot of the guys were having bad years. Now the whole country knew why Garry Maddox wasn't having a good year . . . why Von Hayes wasn't playing up to his potential. Morgan, Maddox, Matthews, Hayes, Greg Gross . . . their problems were exposed. They stopped having concern for their own plight and started rooting for the guy who was playing. Guys came up to me later and told me they were 100% behind what I said."

Reminded about his religious beliefs that include the Lord directing him, Schmidt smiled and said, "We wound up in the World Series, didn't we?" Sometimes the Lord works in mysterious ways.

Schmidt's outburst was dramatically out of character. He has generally been portrayed as someone who goes about his business, avoiding distractions and controversy. There are many Philadelphia fans who think Schmidt, with all his extraordinary ability, has trouble acting humble, although Bill Giles disagrees with this view. "He's probably the most caring player [on the team]," said the Phillies president. "He cares what people say about him. To me he looks nonchalant on the field, which is 180 degrees from what he's really feeling."

When the Phillies were running on only three wheels in the 1980 pennant drive, Dallas Green, then the manager, blistered them between games of a doubleheader in Pittsburgh, after their ninth straight road loss. Schmidt presumably was one of the players Green was talking about when he angrily told the players, "You've gotta stop being so bleeping cool! Get that through your bleeping heads! If you don't, you'll get buried. Get off your asses and just be the way you can be, because you're a good baseball team. But you're not now and you can't look in the bleeping mirror and tell me you are. You tell me you can do it, but you give up."

How times change . . . The Mike Schmidt of 1984 can now smile about his image. He can even tell anecdotes disclosing how fans ride him. "We've got an old guy who sits behind the opposing dugout [third base side] on Sundays at Veterans Stadium," Schmidt said. "His nickname is 'Sunoco' because he wears a Sunoco hat. He'll stand up when it's real quiet and he'll go [imitating someone speaking through a megaphone] 'SCHMIDT, EARN YOUR MONEY!' We have to put up with that every Sunday. It's his identifying factor. He can't wait for Sunday, because that's where he gets his strength."

Showing a maturity in how to handle hecklers, Schmidt grinned and said, "One day, when he yelled, 'SCHMIDT, YOU BETTER EARN THAT MILLION DOLLARS!' I was tempted to back out of the batter's box, walk over to the fence and say to him (very softly), 'That's two million.'" Such retaliation usually turns loudmouth critics to mushmouths.

LAST SEASON, SCHMIDT allowed the public a rare glimpse of the real man inside uniform No. 20. Reaching over the hip-high fence along third base to catch a foul pop-up, Schmidt caught the ball—and a fan's hat. The umpire quickly checked Schmidt's glove to be sure the ball was inside the hat, which it was. It was an amusing sight, seeing Schmidt, the umpire, and the fans all having a few laughs. "Schmitty did that once in New York, too, and the fans went crazy," Owens said. "I'm happy to see that sort of thing. Fans don't want to see mechanical men out there. They want them to feel emotion. That's one reason Tug McGraw has been so popular. When Jay Johnstone was here, he was one of our most popular players. I've told Mike four or five times that coolness is fine in the clubhouse if he wants to impress his buddies. I think Schmitty probably feels he doesn't want to show anybody up by being that way [emotional] on the field. He has a little facade about his personality. He'll feel bad about a play he made, but if you're in the stands, you get the idea he doesn't really care. It's like telling your dad you love him—you feel it and want to do it, but you just don't know how to go about it."

Schmidt's relationship with Philadelphia's sports juries, a.k.a. fans, has been in the top five of love-hate tugs-of-war. The fans have enthusiastically cheered him when he hit one of his 389 home runs, or after one of his 1,074 RBIs, or after he made another of his smooth fielding plays. But let him strike out in a key situation and you'd think Schmidt had just been caught spray-painting graffiti on the Art Museum walls. Maybe the fans resent Schmidt's $2 million a year. Maybe they see all that money and think he should be wearing a Superman T-shirt underneath his uniform. Maybe they think that anyone making all that money should hit at least one home run a game and *never* strike out. Despite several impressive seasons, maybe they agree with Bill Giles when he says, "Mike has never really put it all together."

Some players insist they either don't hear the boos or they bother them as much as a pesky mosquito. But Schmidt doesn't mind admitting the booing troubles him.

"They [fans] have put me through the toughest test," Schmidt said. "I can handle the strikeouts, the errors, the failures, the 1-for-20s. But sometimes I just can't handle the boos. The bad part about that is, I understand that if I say that sometimes I can't handle the booing, it means I'm gonna get booed more. Basically, it's the devil coming out in people. It's like you kid somebody about something you know hurts. If a guy's ugly, and he walks around saying 'I know I'm ugly,' There's no sense kidding him about it. But if a guy thinks he's good-looking, then you call him ugly.

"It perturbs me sometimes that when we get to the World Series and I've had a great year, and I feel like if I hadn't done what I did, we might not have made it, then people should enjoy the World Series instead of booing the hell out of me if I'm 0-for-7 or 8. Down in Baltimore, he [Eddie Murray] is 0-for-15 or 16 and they're still chanting "Eddie! Ed-die!' when he comes to the plate. With me, they're booing.

"But, I'm learning to handle it . . . it's kind of becoming a novelty with me. I don't like it, but I'm trying to handle it. I keep hearing how the fans here used to boo Del Ennis. That's all I know about Del Ennis—he's the guy they booed. I don't want to be known that way when I'm out of the game—he's the guy they used to boo all the time. I'd like to be the guy they never booed. Pete Rose was diving and sliding all the time—they respected him so much, they never booed him. I'm the guy they apparently don't respect, because they boo me all the time."

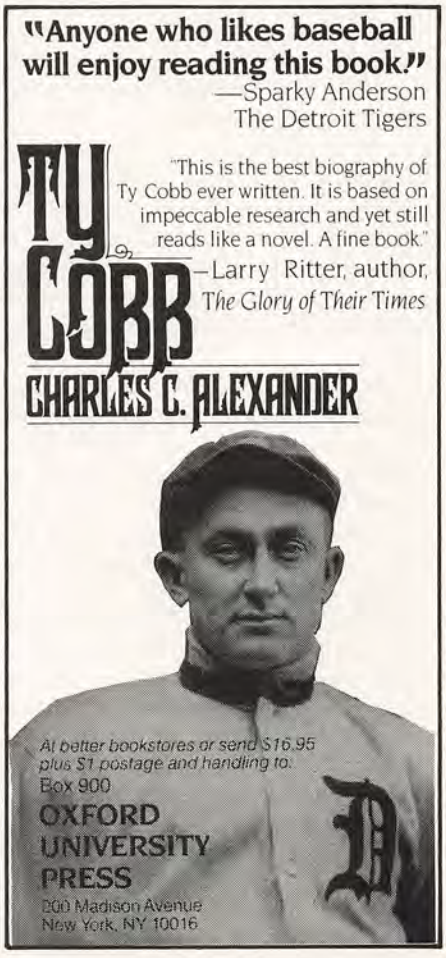
"The fans are on him pretty good, which is a shame," said Giles. "I've told him it's kind of like spanking your baby: When people boo you it's not because they don't like you, it's because they expect more of you. I've sat in the stands and listened to fans cheering like heck for Schmitty to hit a home run. But if he strikes out with the bases loaded, they're gonna boo him because they're disappointed. He's not as popular as he should be, compared with the ability that he shows on the field."

Maybe Schmidt isn't booed as harshly as he thinks, but after 11 years of Chinese water torture, even a few drops feel like a deluge. Anyway, Schmidt divides fans into two categories: true fans and "others."

"I think the people who boo are not caring people," Schmidt said. "Someone who boos is basically a frustrated individual. There's more on his mind . . . he's jealous. He says, 'How can that guy be making that kind of money and strike out for the third time in a row?' All the people around him are the same way, so he can blend in. Then you get the true fans who realize that if they boo, we're gonna do worse. If they boo the 76ers, the Flyers, they're gonna play worse. The boos are gonna make them feel bad and frustrate them and make them lose concentration, because the environment is not conducive to playing well. Who cares if you boo a lineman in football? That's great—it makes the guy madder and he hits the other guy harder. Baseball is a subtle game, like golf. Can you see if Jack Nicklaus walked up to the tee and they announced him and everybody went 'BOOOOOOO!' Could you see him hit a golf ball? Baseball is the same way—it takes touch, timing, good eyesight, concentration. The fans really should be forced to be quiet when you walk up to hit. It would be easier to hit that way. If the fans are booing you when you walk up there, or when you're done, it becomes a harder thing to execute.

"They want their kids to be like Mike Schmidt, yet, there they are, sitting next to their little boy and they're booing me. It's an entanglement that really doesn't make sense. It's just something that happens because it's Philadelphia. If you have a baby and it grows up in Philadelphia, it learns how to boo."

SCHMIDT, AND HUNDREDS OF other professional athletes who have traveled Philadelphia's pot-holed highways, agree that the city's sporting press is partially responsible for the intense atmosphere that prevails around all the city's major league teams. The fans care about their teams and the press cares about accurate, in-depth reporting. A good example of how much the fans are attached to their teams occurred a few days after Baltimore had beaten the Phillies. Eddie, a bartender at the Philadium, a thriving tavern near Veterans Stadium, lowered his head and whispered to a visitor, "They [Phillies] went down hard . . . they really went down hard." Eddie, a character out of Damon Runyon,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was suffering as if he'd just lost a close friend.

The press in Philadelphia has long been known to probe beyond fastballs and curveballs, jump shots and slapshots, trapping defense and nickel defenses. To the dismay of athletes and front-office people, Philadelphia sports writers, like their brethren in several other cities, try to discover what athletes and coaches are thinking and why decisions are made. This makes for uncomfortable confrontations, especially for those athletes who have nothing to say, and do it well.

There are two metropolitan daily newspapers in Philadelphia and at least a dozen suburban dailies that staff Phillies games. Throw in the three major television affiliates and a half-dozen radio station reporters who are regular visitors to the clubhouse before and after games and you have rush-hour congestion.

"Whenever you have townspeople booing, players in that town have a problem with the media," Schmidt said, again slipping into his analyst's blazer. "In this city, there's a dedicated, educated—in most cases—approach to reporting. The players understand this is a soap-opera existence. If you go to L.A., who cares what's written? People there have other interests—they go to the beach, the mountains. Half of them probably don't even read the sports pages. They leave games in the seventh inning—some are just there to see a movie star. But in Philadelphia, people get up the next morning and want to read what Bill Conlin wrote in the *Daily News*. It's a caring town [about its teams], and I don't think that's a comfortable environment [for players]. There are too many personalities butting up against each other. I'll be as cooperative as I can, but I know, before the season's over, I'll have a run-in with [*Inquirer* baseball writers] Peter Pascarelli and Jayson Stark."

Following Schmidt's rip at the front office last September, *Daily News* columnist Mark Whicker criticized Schmidt's attitude. Some samples: "Again this week, Schmidt reminded us that Phillie fans have been not only lucky to watch his Cooperstown abilities the last 11 years, but have profited from his superior intelligence as well. Perhaps the most perceptive athlete in American history, Schmidt's methods of motivating himself and his far inferior teammates are extraordinary in their innovation. . . It's not just the [home run] numbers, it's the sly, canny way that Schmidt goes about producing those figures. He has been known to get seven RBIs in one day, then wait for six days before getting his next one. None of that dull, day-to-day consistency here. Scouts are puzzled. Pitchers are shaken. When will this human dynamo strike again."

Whicker's column infuriated Schmidt to the point that he almost joined Steve Carlton in the silent minority who don't speak to the press. Calling the column "the most vicious, most personal attack of my career," Schmidt said that only a talk with coach Dave Bristol prevented him from zipping his lips. "I've tried to accept what was written as a good Christian, but I find that very difficult to do," he said.

Talking with sports writers is relatively painless for Schmidt compared to meeting the public demands on a baseball star. "I realize I'm sort of an introverted guy," Schmidt said. "I don't enjoy crowds, I don't enjoy attention, I don't enjoy 200 people following me to my car every night after a game for autographs. That makes me feel a little uneasy. I know it's hard for a guy to convey the attitude of being a good example, a good person to emulate, and not follow that up with a smile on my face all the time and handshakes for all the little kids. I just can't do it."

Across the street from Veterans Stadium at the Spectrum, Schmidt finds a fellow member of the superstars club who handles the attention, as Schmidt says, "as well as anyone in professional sports today—maybe in professional sports history. I can't think of a better professional athlete to emulate than Doctor J. His attitude is basically the same as mine about being a good person and a good example. If they all grew up to be Julius Ervings, professional athletics would be that much better. Professional athletes can help mold the future. There's always a big cloud hanging over us, with drug problems and all that dragging us down. You need people like Doctor J and, hopefully, Mike Schmidt to help bring it back up."

When Schmidt heard the charges by Kenneth Moffett that most major-leaguers are self-centered people who don't care about each other because they've learned not to plant roots, the Phillies third baseman shook his head in disagreement with the fired boss of the Major League Players Association. "That's a little harsh," Schmidt said. "Maybe he was speaking about situations he knows about and he's labeling all of us that way. I'd like to think my attitude toward baseball and life in general is common. I'd like for everybody in baseball to have enjoyed life and the game the way I have, but that's not the case. Not many people have had the breaks I've had in my career . . . to come along at the right time . . . no major crippling injuries. I've had some tough times, but I've had an easy road to hoe in comparison to a lot of players, so it's easy for me to adopt this good, solid approach to professional athletics. Some guys end up turning to drugs, some guys have problems with their lawyers, some don't ever find the right guy to manage their money. I've never had to deal with any of the legal people of the players association. I have the best-written contract in baseball."

FOR SOMEONE WITH Schmidt's Christian convictions, continually reading about the latest drug problems in baseball and other sports is disturbing, but he is not ready to saddle up the Mike Schmidt Crusade and sweep across the plains trying to shame the drug-takers out of baseball. Schmidt has been around too long and realizes such an assault wouldn't work. "I've just got to keep plugging away at it with what God's given me," he said, "and realize I'll have an effect in my own way. It'll be the effect that the Lord wants me to have."

The temptation of a cynic is to sneer that the Lord must be an Orioles fan. Schmidt had an outstanding World Series against Kansas City—.381, 2 homers, 7 RBIs—but Baltimore's staff tormented Schmidt into a 1-for-20 flop.

"I haven't had any problems with the World Series last year," he said. "I can't even really remember being in it." Schmidt thinks that the Phillies who were making their World Series debuts will never forget it. "Some of the guys in here got big checks, and they'll remember the hoopla of the World Series," he said, "but I don't feel like the National League champion.

"While I was in it, I never thought I was gonna play bad. I was confident, prepared, and I was working hard. I did everything I possibly could to play good, but they [the Orioles] were just too good for me. And that's hard to swallow for a guy like me. But for me to come through the winter and into this season, I feel that's the best way for me to think about it. If I'm able to say, look, those guys just did a good job on me, and in baseball, that can happen, that'll make me a better man for the coming year. Sure I'll hear some stuff about it—'Choke, choke,' and the whole routine—but I'll be more calloused and able to handle those comments better.

"I had a pretty good playoff [.467, one home run, 2 RBIs vs. the Dodgers]. People can't put me down totally about postseason play last year. But who remembers the playoffs? 'What have you done for me lately?' is a very strong cliché in Philadelphia."

Although Schmidt reports to Philadelphia's spring-training complex in Clearwater, Fla., each February to work on a specific area of his game, he says he has never set any definite "numbers goals." This year, like every year, he wants to hit .300, hit 40 home runs, and drive in 120 runs. "If they're talking about leadership from Mike Schmidt," he said, smiling again, "those kind of numbers would provide all the leadership they need from me."

ONE GOAL SCHMIDT WOULD enjoy is reclaiming the unofficial status of being rated "the best player in baseball." During his MVP seasons of 1980 and '81, many observers knighted Schmidt No. 1. Does he still consider himself No. 1? "No, Dale Murphy is," Schmidt said without hesitating. "He's the best defensive player at his position, and the last two years he's had the best offensive production. He's where I was in '80 and '81. Dale Murphy plays the biggest part on any team toward his team winning. When the game starts, percentagewise he has the highest percentage of affecting his team's chance of winning. I'm maybe second, third, or fourth now, but I have the potential to regain that status. It's a thrill, at the end of the year, to be a guy like Andre Dawson, Pedro Guerrero, George Hendrick, Bill Buckner, me, maybe Dave Parker, who can be in that position [to be called the best]."

Being the best has its privileges and disadvantages, as every superstar from Samson to Steve Garvey has learned. Baseball in the free-agent era means big bucks, but in a city like Philadelphia, it also means privacy is difficult to pursue when you're a guy like Schmidt, who doesn't like to go out dancing every night to be seen.

"I'd rather not have the recognition—I'm not a Reggie Jackson or Joe Namath," Schmidt said. "When we're in Clearwater, I can go to a movie, or McDonald's, or have the car washed and be myself, be Daddy. But I can't go anywhere in Philadelphia. My wife answers the door. When we go to McDonald's, she goes in. I know it's a contradiction, that it goes with the territory. When I was young, I thought it would be neat for everybody to know who you are. When I gave my first autograph [playing for Ohio University] at the College World Series, I was on Cloud Nine. But now, I look at a guy like Michael Jackson, who has to wear dark glasses and have bodyguards around him the rest of his life, and I think I ought to be able to get by with the problems I've got."

Mike Schmidt is willing to be a more visible leader; he's in control of his life on and off the field. Maybe he'll even find a way to win over his friend "Sunoco." On second thought, the only way Schmidt will probably ever satisfy "Sunoco" and other critics would be to ring up those .300-40-120 numbers. If only someone would invent invisible earmuffs, Schmidt could at least chase his goal in peace. ■

BILL FLEISCHMAN *is the assistant sports editor of the* Philadelphia Daily News. *As a singles hitter who led his high school league in getting hit by pitches, Bill never had to worry about autograph seekers the way Schmidt does.*

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Larry Pashnick Is Every One of Us

He's the classic underdog—the struggling pitcher who's trying to make it in the bigs

By ALAN STEINBERG

IT'S MIDNIGHT AND I'M ATTACKing the popcorn ferociously as "Nightline" guests debate the effects of ABC's "The Day After," a movie even I had a nightmare about. Then the phone intrudes and I pick it up distractedly.

"Al?" rasps an unbeautiful voice. "This is Larry. Guess what."

"The Russians just bombed Lincoln Park and you're bummed out."

"What?"

"Skip it. What's shakin'? I'm in the middle of a learning situation here, Lar."

"Yeah? Well did you learn I was traded to the Twins for Rusty Kuntz?"

"Whom?" I'm playing dumb; I read about it already.

"Rusty Kuntz. Batted .211 with three homers and six RBIs last year. Finished the season with the Toledo Mud Hens."

"Boy," I wheeze. "That's sorta like Koufax for Mays."

"Yeah," he agrees, self-irony unbruised. "I can't talk long, I'm expecting a congratulatory call from the president."

"Larry, the fact is the world will little note nor long remember this trade. You marginal types gotta realize you're a dime a dozen."

"The price went *up?*" he laughs at himself.

"Anyway, I just wanted to keep you informed, Steinberg."

"Thanks, I'll use it in my story."

"Gotta sign off. Cosell and Kissinger are coming up the walk. I can see Dan Rather right behind them."

"Hang in there, Pash," I urge seriously now. "You can take it."

"I have to," he says, resigned.

LARRY PASHNICK OF WYANdotte, Mich., *can* take it. He came out of nowhere, and when he finally made it, nobody ever heard of him and they couldn't remember his name. He was a starting pitcher for the Tigers in his hometown, then he wasn't, then he was. He did some long relief, some middle, some short, then no relief at all. He went down to the minors, got called back up, got sent back down, came back up. It's been incredibly great and incredibly bad and very hard to understand. Can't a person just make it, do exactly what he's dreamed of doing, impress whomever the hell needs to be impressed and make a career? Why's it gotta see-saw all the time? Why's it gotta go lousy so he has to prove himself someplace else and claw back to where he's already been?

That's OK, though. Larry Pashnick is still only 27 years old and he can definitely take it. Question is: why bother?

When he thinks about the grind, Pashnick reminds himself of that gorgeous southern day in Lakeland, Fla., when he strolled wide-eyed into the Detroit Tigers locker room, the only rookie on the '82 club. He saw the bubble gum, the variety of chewing tobacco—one box of every kind you could name—the sugar-free gum and the juice machine with orange and grapefruit and even Gatorade, and the cooler swollen with polished fruit and ice-cold, pint-size cans of every juice under the stunning major league sun.

He couldn't believe it. He thought, "Wow, it's not A-ball anymore, it's free this, free that." Then pitcher Dave Tobik bumped him from behind and said, "Get outa the way, rook, my bag's heavy," and he got out of the way. Venturing in, Pashnick gazed at all those familiar names on the locker stalls: Kaline, Freehan, Whitaker, Trammel, Parrish, Morris. Then he spotted "Larry Pashnick" above a stall in the corner and his jaw just dropped off his face.

"It was," he recalls vividly, "the same amazing feeling of awe you had when you first saw the inside of Tiger Stadium as a kid. You know, Dad takes the kids to 'Family Night,' you're walking around slowly to your seat and you look out between the girders and the lights are shining so brilliantly, the grass is silky green, and you're thinking, 'Look how *close* we are, this is it!'

'People struggling to realize their dreams root for me like they'd root for themselves.'

"And you get in your seat—right behind the dugout—start munching a hot dog, watch the game, and you're dumbstruck at all these famous guys out there running around, looking like they've lived there all their lives. You think, 'What a great life that must be; I play baseball, too, I'm in the sandlots every day, but these guys are *here* at Tiger Stadium, with everyone watching them in their crystal-white uniforms and their nice blue hats, they're so well-groomed and their spikes are new—everything just looks so fantastic!'

"That's what I was feeling in the locker room in '82," Pashnick says in a Huck Finn voice still squeaky with the original awe. "I looked around and said to myself, 'Wow, this is the big leagues, this is what it's all about and I'm actually here.'"

Every time Pashnick got shuffled back to Evansville, he summoned the image of seeing that locker room as a big-leaguer, and he replayed in his mind that ecstatic feeling of: This is what it's all about.

BUT IT'S NOT. IT'S NOT ABOUT dreaming the dream through restless, physical youth, then waking up to find it's true. It's not about brilliant lights and uniforms, bubble gum, coolers of juice, and Kaline's name on a stall. It's about confidence and inconsistency, politics and management, emotional musical chairs. It's about unbearable frustration, lost opportunities, "I just don't have it" days and "If I can just strike this one guy out" nights. It's about mastery and self-belief, and self-control when nothing much seems controllable. It's about outlasting failure, working your butt off, keeping your mouth shut, coming up through the ranks, getting breaks, making the cuts, then finding out your body can betray you and leave you floundering for the first time in your career, leave you standing out there with your jock around your ankles, holding a brand-new glove and an official American League ball and trying to do what you think you do best in life, and suddenly failing so badly you don't know anymore whether you're the organism or the environment. It's all about emotion and psychology and perseverance, even though you have no idea what the hell they really mean. It's about ordinary extraordinary athletes, thousands of them through the years, who flood up to the bigs then trickle away for good, never finding their niche, not being mediocre enough to wash out quickly and start selling cars, and not superb enough to forge a private path and blaze a lasting name. In short, being a young pitcher in and out of the major leagues is being a Larry Pashnick.

"Abilitywise, I'm a major-leaguer, or I couldn't have ever made it up," Pashnick reflects. "But how do you analyze why some guys are great and others are not? It's an intangible. Who's worth $50,000 a year, who's worth $2.5 million, who's gonna last in the end? What determines that?

"I think, for pitchers, it's wins. Somehow, some way, the great pitchers do something and they end up with the wins. A Jack Morris wins 20 games, 19, 17—he'll get the opportunity in close games to tighten his belt in the rough innings and stay in the game to tough it out. A Larry Pashnick, with five major league victories and only one complete game victory, won't get the chance unless he pitches nearly perfect ball or has the big, safe lead. They won't stay with me, it hasn't happened.

"But look, how many major league pitchers are the Jack Morrises, the consistent winners year after year, and how many are the Larry Pashnicks, the guys just trying to refine their skills and *develop* into winners? You don't have a lot of Palmers, Seavers, Guidrys; how many can you name off the top of your head? With about 250 pitchers on major league staffs, maybe 20 have the potential to pull that weight, maybe 10 do it every year consistently. Most of the others are me, they're all Larry Pashnick. I really believe the heart of major league pitching staffs are Larry Pashnicks.

"Hey," he adds after a pause, "if Larry Pashnick would've won 10 games as a starter

last year, the Tigers would've beaten *Baltimore* out."

You look at Pashnick's career and if you don't focus in sharp, you miss it. A walk-on at Michigan State, he was captain his senior year but didn't get to travel to play non-conference teams such as Eastern and Central Michigan. He finished his MSU career below .500. Scouts didn't swarm. Even the talk he had with an unenthusiastic Tigers scout was like hoping against hope you could score with the homecoming queen.

"I'd just seen Rick Leach sign out of Michigan for six figures and Gibby [Tiger outfielder Kirk Gibson], my teammate at MSU, signed for six figures, too, so I was thinking, 'This is great, Detroit's talking to me, they want me to play, I'm gonna get *all* kinds of money now, I'm gonna get a big bonus!'" Pashnick says, amused. "And the offer was: 'Well, we're going to give you the opportunity to play on one of our clubs.' I said, 'What about a bonus?' He said, 'Well Larry, there's really no bonus involved. Your collegiate career is over, you don't have any clout. If you want to keep playing, we're going to give you the opportunity to go to the minor leagues and still play.'

"And I said, 'Well what does that consist of?' He said, 'We'll pay your airfare . . . ' I thought, 'God, I don't know about this. I've got a degree, I can go out and work.' But then I thought, 'Well, I've worked awful hard to get this far, I gotta try it, I gotta go after the dream. I can pitch in the major leagues.' So I penciled in my name."

After he penciled in his name, he spent three years fueling his dream by excelling in the bushes. In '81, the year of the major league strike, Tigers manager Sparky Anderson saw Pashnick pitch several times and was openly impressed. Sparky had three set starters for '82: Morris, Dan Petry, and Milt Wilcox, and he needed a fourth. Pashnick, he thought, might be his big spring find.

Pashnick thought so, too. And it seemed like it would work out that way, because he made the roster, survived the cuts, and went north with the parent club. His first trip to the bigs. He was drowning in adrenaline. This was what it was all about . . .

"I remember my first time," he muses proudly, the way many of us muse about the first time we ever made love. "The opening series in Detroit got snowed out so we went to Kansas City, and on April 11, 1982, I finally got the call. It's the seventh and we're out of the ball game. We're in the bullpen bundled up in mittens and parkas watching the game, eating sunflower seeds, talking, carrying on. Then the call from the dugout comes and Pooch [catcher Bill Fahey] answers it.

"He goes, 'OK Pash, you're throwing the 8th and Pat [Underwood], you're throwing the 9th.' I'm thinking, 'OK, now tell me we're just getting up to throw and that's gonna be all.' But Pooch says, 'Hey, let's go! This is it, get ready!'

"So I rip off my mittens and parka and I'm all pumped up and I'm thinking, 'Damn, this *is* it! I'm going in the game!' I couldn't grasp it, though, because I didn't expect to get used for *months* and, bingo, first series, get ready Pashnick, you're gonna throw in the major leagues! So I had to tell myself, 'Maintain, calm down.' But I get up to throw, and I swear, I take three or four throws and the catcher's glove is popping and I'm ready, just like that. I feel like I can throw the ball through a brick wall. I feel I can do *anything* now, yet I'm still uneasy as hell. I don't want to go out there and get rocked in my first inning. I don't want to get the hook *already,* you know, I gotta make a *showing* here.

"So I continue to throw a while, waiting for the inning to end. And I'm thinking how I came through the back door to the major leagues, and how Sparky didn't even know who I was before I threw a no-hitter against the Iowa Oaks in triple-A, and that this is a TV game back to Detroit. Friday night, my parents are glued to the set, all the local bars have the game on, and my brother and friends and relatives are all watching someplace right now and they're goin', 'He's warming up! He's gonna get in the game! I don't believe it!' And here I am, thinking the exact same thing: 'I'm warming up, I'm gonna get in the game! I don't believe it!'

"After I finish throwing, I sit down to wait. Then I get up, go for a drink, come back, spit a couple of times, fidget around. Pooch goes, 'Relax, hey, it's OK. I'm goin' in there with you, I'll keep you calm. It's the same game out there that you've always played.' I go, 'OK, yeah. I'm calm, I'm calm, don't worry about a thing; but I'm talking a mile a minute. The inning finally ends, I get up and me and Pooch start walking through left field toward the mound. I'm not sure I'm even thinking now, but Pooch is talking the whole way: 'Just throw strikes, Pash, challenge the hitters, get in front of 'em, get 'em to hit the ground ball, we'll be outa there before you know it. Just relax, stay calm, I know the hitters, I'll be helping you all the way.'

"And we pass Larry Herndon and he says something encouraging, and then we pass Brookie [Tom Brookens] and Tram [Alan Trammel] in the infield and they're saying, 'OK Pash, throw strikes, we're behind you.'

"Then I'm by myself and I jog a little to get to the mound. I get out there, I hit the rosin, smooth the dirt around the rubber, hit my hat, front then back, pick my sleeves loose, nervous routines you don't even think about. Then I take my warmups and the ball's popping again and I'm all psyched up, I can throw *anything.* I just hope it's gonna work. Finally I'm ready and the bench is cheering and I can hear Milt Wilcox yell: 'C'mon, keep the ball down, keep the ball down!' Now I'm thinking, 'Well, OK, I'm done, I guess I'm gonna have

'I give them the autograph, and they say, "Who's this?"'

to pitch now.' It strikes me funny because I always thought that when this finally happened I'd get out there and look so calm and cool that no one would know I was scared. And here I'm reluctant, nervous, fidgety, and everyone in the whole damn *country* can see how wound up I am. Man, I'm wound tighter than a drum.

"Enos [Cabell] comes over and says, 'It's all right, be cool, settle down, do a job.' I'm walking around the mound, thinking, 'Fine, all right, great, let's go already, let's get this over with, people, let's do *something* out here!'

"Pooch comes out, talks to me some more, lays out the signals, keeps psyching me, then goes back. Next thing I know, here comes Hal McRae leading off. I'm telling myself, 'Well at least he's a righthander. Remember: helluva hitter, has the power to bust it outa here, keep it down, ground ball, make him hit it on the ground.' I get the signal, I'm all pumped, instinct takes over, I wind, kick, hold my breath and come with the fastball—wow, my first major league pitch!

"Ball one, low and inside, skips off the dirt. I'm telling myself, 'I gotta throw a strike, I gotta get the leadoff hitter out.' Pooch signals for another fastball: called strike one. I'm sure McRae didn't intend to swing anyway. He's probably thinking, 'OK, lucky pitch, we're gonna make him throw a strike before we start commencing on him.'

"Now I've thrown my first strike, so never mind the dream anymore, I gotta actually get out of the inning here. So I come with a good slider, ball two, just missed again. I'm goin', 'Damn, they used to *swing* at that in the minors, they'd give me my ground ball. I'm gonna have to bring that in a little closer.' I come with another slider, same location, McRae goes after it and hits a ground ball to Lou [Whitaker], and I have my first major league out.

"Now I'm prancing all over the mound again, feeling great, waiting for the ball to come back in from Brookie. This is great, isn't it? Let's get that ball back and do it again, let's go, let's go . . .

"Next batter is Frank White. First pitch, he hits a ground ball between second and first for a single. He was behind the pitch but there he is standing on first base. OK, one out, man on first, no sweat, stay cool. Who's covering? Next hitter comes up—Jerry Martin—I get the sign, but I throw over to first about six times. I want to establish that I have a move, so don't be going anywhere on me, Jake, I don't want you on second base quite yet.

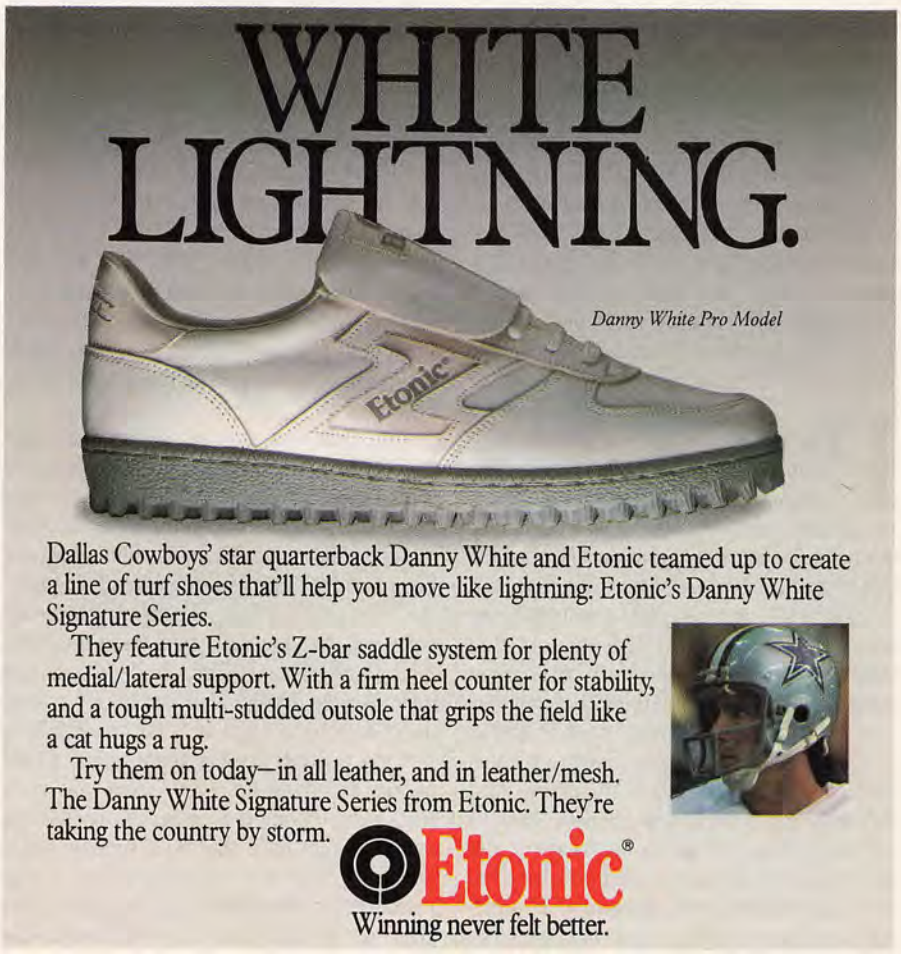
"Come to the plate, ball one inside. Ball two, low and inside again. Throw to first a few times. Throw another fastball, jam him, he taps a slow grounder to Brookie, no play at second, get him at first. Two outs, man on second. Eighth hitter comes up—U.L. Washington. Ball one with the fastball. I gotta keep throwing fastballs because I don't wanna give up a run with my second-best pitch, my slider. So I run another fastball in, jam him, grounder to first. I swear, I'm covering first before Enos catches the ball. Everyone in the dugout is laughing: Wow, did you see Pashnick bust over there to make sure he wasn't gonna miss that throw?

"Enos flips me the ball, we get the out at first and we start trotting off together. He goes, 'Nice job, ground balls.' I'm way ahead of him by now, I'm practically in the dugout. Pooch meets me: 'That's it,' he says. 'There's nothing to this game.' Coach comes over and says, 'Nice work, that's enough, we're bringing in Pat for the 9th.' 'Fine,' I'm thinking. 'Great. It's all over. I waited 25 years for that and I got here and I did it, and it's out of my system now. Great. Outstanding. Unbelievable. I'm a big league pro now. Wow. Cloud nine.'"

OVER THE NEXT 10 DAYS, Pashnick made two no-decision starts and pitched four innings of relief in three more games. Then, on April 24, the day before his 26th birthday, undrafted, unknown, cloud-nine Larry Pashnick went seven innings in awesome Yankee Stadium to beat New York for his first major league win. Sparky Anderson said he would reward Pashnick with a starting slot in the rotation. Cloud ten.

A month later, Pashnick had faltered after seven starts, was 1-2, and lost his rotation spot to Pat Underwood. "I don't know," Pashnick told the *Detroit Free Press* at the time. "It seems like I'll have a real live fastball and a good slider when I'm warming up, but then I get out there in the game and I don't have it. I don't know what it is." Thursday, June 17, he cleaned out his locker before the Tigers' game against the Brewers and headed back to Evansville. He stayed there for three weeks until the Tigers called him back up again in time to pitch his first complete game against Texas, which the Tigers won 3-1. But the handwriting was already on the wall.

"I was inconsistent," he admits today, still hoping to beat that rap with the Twins. "I'd get to the 6th or 7th inning running a six-hitter, humming along perfectly, and then this voice in my head would go, 'What's gonna happen now? Something's gonna go wrong here to cost me the ball game, what's it gonna be?' It was like a prophecy, because I'd start losing batters and giving up walks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for no reason at all, and then I'd be gone. The strange thing was that in triple-A I was always confident as hell. I led the league in complete games. I didn't care who you brought to the plate against me, I didn't care if it was Babe Ruth in his second incarnation or some hot kid from the minors, I *knew* I was gonna own him, I *knew* I was gonna get him out. And most of the time I did. Yet, with the Tigers, using the same pitches, the same attitude to start off, I'd end up asking myself how the hell I got into these jams. I couldn't get over that 6th or 7th inning hump. I was stuck, hot, then cold, had it, didn't have it."

'I'd just seen Rick Leach and Kirk Gibson sign right out of college for six figures. So I was thinking, "This is great, Detroit's talking to me, they want me to play, I'm gonna get *all* kinds of money now."'

When he got sent down that first time in '82, it was a devastating blow. He had just begun to convince himself that for the first time in his career everything was on the up and up. He'd made the major leagues, he could set different goals now, like staying there and winning 10 games, but he never got the chance. It was hard to understand, hard to believe, he was totally lost. Even when he came back later in the season, he still felt like he hadn't succeeded, and he'd lost a lot of that childish awe of the major leagues.

"The excitement was still there," Pashnick notes, "but not that air of mystique, that question mark: do I really belong here? I knew I could pitch and win in the big leagues, that I belonged there, I just didn't know how to insure that I *stayed* there."

PASHNICK'S INNOCENCE BEgan to wash away last year. The dream wasn't lovely anymore, it was just tough to maintain. He discovered that, at this point, he was only a marginal pitcher and that he might never do better than that. But the dream still glittered and he wouldn't lose hope. He realized that, like the old Bob Dylan song says, "Everybody must give something back for something they get."

"I was incredibly naive," says Pashnick now, still nourishing some naiveté for his next go-round in the bigs. "After my first appearance in a big league game in K.C., I felt everything was gonna be great and the euphoria set in. Everyone congratulated me for doing well, we were slapping five, shaking hands all around, and I was thinking, 'Wow, if it's all like this, it's gonna be unbelievably great!' I mean, here I had an envelope with over $400 for meal money on the trip, and that was more money than I saw in the minors on every paycheck. I could go out to eat at any restaurant I wanted, have a fantastic meal. I didn't need to worry anymore about McDonald's or Burger King—you know, that's *by* me already. And the hotel is immaculate, big beautiful rooms, a 50-store shopping mall right in the hotel—unbelievable.

"So I'm bubbling over, yet telling myself to maintain: 'I'm a major league athlete now, gotta maintain.' Then, while you're traveling with the team, you're dressed up and you run into all these little kids with baseball cards and photos, and they want autographs. You walk around the lobby with the other players, and kids say sign this, sign that. With me, they say to their father: 'Daddy, who's that? Should we get his autograph, too?' You can tell they're wondering, 'Is this guy just walking out with these guys or what?'

"It's so funny because at times when they ask who you are and you tell them, they look at you strange and they go, 'Well, are you *with* the team?' I go, 'Yeah, I'm with the team.' I give them the autograph and they still turn to their parents and say, 'Who's *this*? What does *this* say?'" Pashnick giggles goodnaturedly. "It's nice and it's funny at the same time.

"But that was part of the problem, because I had to learn to cope with losing all that when I got sent down. You know, you buy into the myth, you get used to it, enjoy it, indulge it, and suddenly the minor leagues begins to look like working on a chain gang. Because now I'm Larry Pashnick on a baseball card, walking with guys from the bigs, giving autographs to kids who only want the major league autographs, and then I'm suddenly back to being: 'Larry Pashnick? Who's he?' on a minor league team about which people go, 'Who are they?' And you start thinking you don't belong in the minors now and you don't have that meal money in the envelope, you aren't eating in the classy restaurants, you aren't flying first class, you aren't in the bullpen at K.C. with the incredible field and the waterfall, you aren't facing Hal McRae and Willie Wilson and George Brett, none of these things exist anymore.

"And you realize that your dream of pitching in the major leagues has expanded and divided—binary fission—because being a major-leaguer is so much more than just that original kid's dream of throwing the ball to a star. Now it's all these other niceties that you can't have anymore. It's a phenomenal feeling, the major leagues. It's like orgasm, let's be realistic. How can you achieve a feeling of orgasm without having sex? Hey, I've just found a way! And they want to take that away from me again?

"You feel sorry for yourself. No matter where you are, once you've tasted the majors and go back to the minors, you feel like you don't belong there anymore, you've already crossed through that place. You feel anger and bitterness and you're thinking, 'Why me? Why send *me* down?'

"So they send you down and the world you were in has suddenly been stuck by a pin and it's gone. Man, you're lost, you don't know where to go for support or confidence or motivation. Why should I bust my ass all over again to have sporadic success in the major leagues, and have someone walk up again with another pin and blow up *another* world? The only answer is that, in a little while, the dream revives. You start thinking, 'Well, I've been there, so maybe with a little hard work this nightmare will be over forever, and after I spend 10 years in the majors, if someone comes down the road with a pin I can say then: 'Go ahead, stick it! Hey, I've done it! I'm in the bigs for good! Go ahead!'"

SO IT *IS* THE DREAM AFTER ALL. Even after knowing what it's *really* all about, it's still the driving dream. First it's getting there, just making it to the bigs. Then it's throwing a single pitch, the *first* pitch of your major league career. Then it's getting that first out, those first three outs, getting out of just one inning. Then it's lasting at least six innings, then going the distance, then winning your first major league game. Then it's meal money, hotels, planes, autographs, and adulation. Then it's maintaining, staying there, perpetuating yourself. Holding on. Then it's dodging the pins. Then it's getting stuck by the pin and going back down, and wanting so badly to get back up, even though the bigs is full of giant pins in camouflaged hands, reaching, grasping, aiming at your bubble from everywhere, trying to explode your world.

Amazing dream. Thing is, it isn't just a Larry Pashnick dream, it's *everybody's*. That's what else he's learned.

What comes to mind, he'll tell you, is the commercial on TV where a Little-Leaguer, who was the goat the inning before, dives for

a line drive, and it's in slow motion, and he comes up with the fantastic catch. And at that instant, everyone around him—fans, teammates, everyone—is jubilant. They've all felt that instant rush of adrenaline, that instant high that was the catch. Even though *they* didn't do it, they *felt* as if they'd done it.

Pashnick fleshes it out, and you realize now he's right, he's not talking about himself anymore, he's talking about people in the phone book and the candy stores and factories and mansions on Telegraph Hill. You realize he's talking about you.

"If I'm on the mound," he says, "with the bases loaded, and I get that big punch-out, that strikeout is felt by the fans and my teammates and the people watching or listening at home, and it charges them up the same as me. There're guys out there somewhere sitting on the edge of their seats, biting their nails, going, 'He can do it.' They're thinking, 'That could be me, that's *part* of me, I was *on* that team, I'm just like him, he could be me out there.'

"Somehow, people are able to identify with me. Last year was so frustrating for me, and somehow people felt the frustration right along with me, and some sorrow, some pity when things went wrong. I think I'm the classic underdog. I'm the type of guy who's not beyond the substance of anybody else's dreams. I'm not that superstar or that cynical ballplayer who'll snub people. I'll try to do as much as I can to relate to people, to help someone. I don't feel or act like I'm in my own little utopia. I'm part of a community, I'm part of the world. I'm a kid from the neighborhood who nobody ever heard of, who made it to Tiger Stadium to pitch in front of everyone he knows. Yet, I'm still struggling, I'm still the guy nobody knows, I'm still the underdog, just like them.

"A lot of people feel right along with me that I *wasn't* a No. 1 draft pick out of college, I *wasn't* a big bonus baby, and that now, out of the blue, I'm traded away and have to try to make a major league roster all over again. Everyone has a struggle like mine in their life. Maybe mine seems to be on a larger plane because the public can experience it through the media, but it happens to everyone else, in silence or obscurity, every day.

"I'm viewed as the average ballplayer at best. And people who view themselves as average, middle-class people struggling to realize their dreams, see me as someone in the same boat, and they root for me like they'd be rooting for themselves. They're pushing me in their minds just like they're pushing themselves—to get that raise from their boss, to move up the next step in their job, to make a better life. And that's exactly what I'm doing when I try to push myself from that 'average at best,' inconsistent ballplayer to a steady 10-game winner, a 12-game winner, a 20-game winner who can pull his weight. I want the chance to achieve that.

"We all have to fight against the same forces in our work: politics, red tape, misconceptions, insensitivities, mistaken judgments of those in power above us, lack of opportunity, and failure at our job. I made a speech to young kids at a banquet recently, and I said that I group a lot of people in the class of minor league ballplayers. I said this definition applies to a wide group of people who live a life every day that *isn't* very pretty, that's cruel, painful, disappointing, confusing, sometimes unbearable. How can they do it? I said they can do it because they're striving for something much better, because they dream of a better life, whether it be that next tax bracket so they can send their kids to college, or just that next promotion so they can pay the bills.

"I told them everybody has something important they haven't achieved yet that they want to achieve. I said: 'Larry Pashnick is every one of them. And every one of them is me.'" ■

Contributing writer ALAN STEINBERG, *who previously profiled San Diego Clippers' star forward Terry Cummings for* INSIDE SPORTS, *says he specializes in no-jive profiles. "When I read about an athlete," Alan says, "I expect to be their confidante. I want them telling me, 'Here's something nobody else knows.'"*

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Backups Take Center Stage

When the NBA playoffs heat up, reserve centers are forced into a starring role

By CHARLEY ROSEN

THESE DAYS, BETTER GUARDS than Bob Cousy cost a million dollars a dozen—and there's an outstanding forward at the other end of every telephone. "But the talent level dramatically decreases with players 6'8" and above," says a diminutive one-time NBA coach, "because big men tend to be goons. With such a chronic scarcity of talented big men, smart coaches always try to hoard centers."

Accordingly, one of every four NBA players is a center. Most rosters are three-deep in the middle, and Milwaukee leads the league with five available big men. To the basketball public, the 23 starting centers are familiar: Kareem's celestial hookery. Robert Parish raining points from his pivots high and low. Moses Malone's relentless power in the shadow of the basket. Jack Sikma's jump-shot polka.

Yet, throughout the NBA, starting centers average only 32.1 minutes per game—so almost one-third of NBA action centers around substitute big men. And as the playoffs heat up, no team dares pretend to the NBA championship without an effective backup center. But what does Harvey Catchings' jump shot look like? And who's better—Kevin McHale, Clemon Johnson, or Marvin Webster? Exactly why does Rich Kelley have a million-dollar contract? Can Paul Mokeski simultaneously shoot free throws and chew gum?

SEVERAL TEAMS PREFER THE cagey insurance offered by veteran centers who once knew the glories and rewards of the opening tip—valuable performers such as Steve Hawes, Billy Paultz, the fragile Alvan Adams, and others who can no longer endure the rigors of starting time. Often, an old-timer such as Sam Lacey, Dave Cowens, or Elvin Hayes proves useless coming off the bench. "The Big E should have retired two years ago," says another unemployed coach. "Elvin's playing strictly for the record books. Just because he's been around for such a long time doesn't necessarily mean Elvin can help Sampson adjust. Elvin never was a very knowledgeable player. But, who knows? Throw enough crap against the wall and some of it will stick."

Today's corps of substitute centers also includes several youngsters being allowed ample time to grow into their XXXL-size bodies. The likes of Jeff Ruland, Dave Corzine, and Jack Sikma were all patiently nurtured into starting centers. Such also are the hopes of Tom Piotrowski, a 7'1" rookie with Portland; 6'10" Mark West of the Dallas Mavericks; Seattle's 7'0" Steve Hayes; and the Bulls' Wallace Bryant, another seven-footer. All needing instruction in the intricacies of post play, they earn the minimum wage. Unarmed against the Elbow of Experience, they are more liable to injury. They also bring an element of clumsy surprise to disrupt the middle of a game. "It's a long season," says Knicks coach Hubie Brown, "and a lot of big guys go down hard. Besides, if you ever need to make a change, then young centers will always bring the most value in trades."

The dire necessities of the nine-month season can often thrust an immature center into a starting spot. Just last November, the apprenticeship of James Donaldson came to an untimely end with the latest injury to Bill Walton. By all accounts, Donaldson has stopped growing at 7'2" and 280 pounds. Scouts also report him as being slow, immobile, a hard-worker, and an all-around nice guy. "Donaldson hasn't learned to pace himself," notes an anonymous NBA assistant. "Starting time bends his back and strains his concentration. This means Donaldson is habitually in early foul trouble and forced to back off on defense. We usually get easy shots whenever we point our offense at Donaldson."

Centers too old and too young—but the vast majority of the NBA's backups have deficiencies of size or skill that simply cannot survive full-time scrutiny: At 6'9", Seattle's Steve Hawes and Chicago's Steve Johnson are useful scorers, but too small to play passable defense—both can be easily posted and plagued with foul trouble. Utah's Jeff Wilkins is center-size at 6'11" and 250 pounds. "Wilkins is a good jumper," says an NBA scout. "Adequate defense. Not a bad shooter. But Wilkins remains a backup because his reading of game situations is questionable and he commits stupid fouls." According to another report, Detroit's Kent Benson "misses foul shots in the clutch and can be bullied inside."

Slow-footed Paul Mokeski has played with four teams in five NBA seasons (currently the 7'0", 260-pounder backs up Bob Lanier in Milwaukee). Mokeski is also renowned for a modestly successful hook shot, savvy passes, and pile-driving picks. "Mo never liked to work hard," says a former teammate, "but I hear he's hustling for the Bucks." The Knicks' 7'1" Webster is likewise slow and stiff-jointed, and his offense is negligible. Webster's presumed specialty is defense—yet he is useless against good-shooting teams, and effective only against low-posters and teams that penetrate.

At first glance, Rich Kelley seems to be just another slow, white seven-footer with mediocre stats. Yet Kelley, who also played power forward this season, has survived nine NBA seasons and his game is well-scouted: "Bad leaper. Average defense. Short arms. Works hard. Smart passer. Courageous." With the Utah Jazz, Kelley's main function is to harmonize the talents of Adrian Dantley, Darrell Griffith, and John Drew . . . Here's Kelley taking a lob pass at the foul line. Here comes Dantley battling into the three-second lane, his elbows flared to claim his space, his eyes demanding the ball. "One-Mississippi," the referee says to himself. Kelley lifts his eyebrows and shrugs his shoulders to make his jumper a threat. "Two-Mississippi. Two-and-a-half . . . " Here's Kelley tossing a nifty bounce pass that leads Dantley's right hand to the basket. More often than not, Dantley is thumped as

he shoots: "Tweet!" bleats the referee. "Good if it goes!" But when the ball falls off the rim Kelley loses the assist.

MOST COACHES AGREE THAT the ideal backup center is a menacing shot-blocker. "To cover for the defensive shortcomings of the second unit," says Hubie Brown. "Especially if the other team leaves some starters in the game." Like many modern coaches, Brown wants his second team to press and trap at all points, tactics requiring a stern big man to slap away foolhardy layups.

The ideal substitute center also spends his benchtime analyzing the game at hand. "The most difficult part is coming in cold and having to be strong right away," says a current practitioner. "Most of us are overmatched in size, strength, and skill against all of the starting centers in the league. So we compensate by trying to create a ruckus. But the refs always get mad whenever a bench player tries to change the tempo of a ball game. I'd say that the inflexibility of the refs is a major reason why so many of us are in constant foul trouble."

The model backup works furiously in practice, keeping the starter's game well-honed. Not so long ago, Eric Fernsten backed up Dave Cowens and Robert Parish in Boston. "Eric was an inspiring player for us," says Larry Bird. "The Celtics started to slide when the club let him go."

Back in the season of 1961-62, Wilt Chamberlain conducted a personal campaign to annihilate every other center in the NBA—averaging 50.4 points, 25.7 rebounds, playing *48.5* minutes per game. Chamberlain rendered no other center so helpless as his own backup, Joe Ruklick, whose season-long playing time at center totaled two minutes.

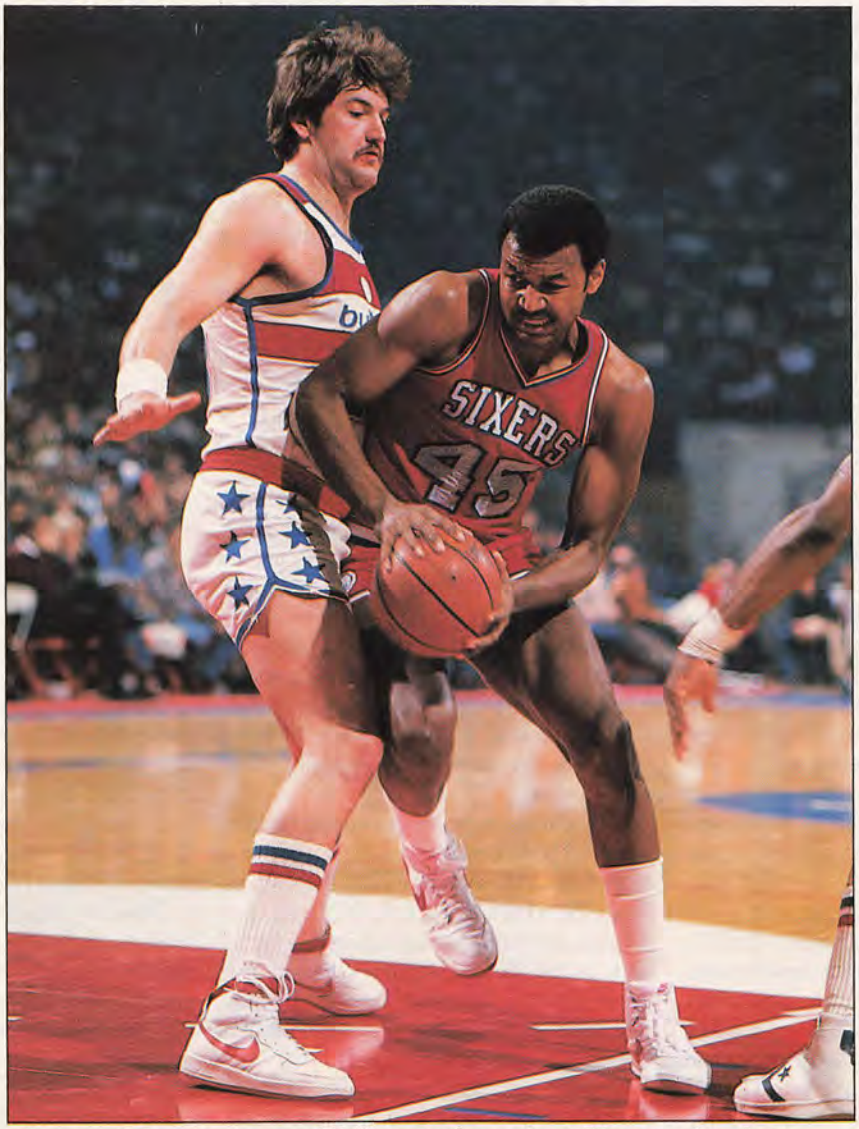
Nowadays, Moses Malone, when healthy, puts in the most time—leaving only 10 minutes a game for his backup, Clemon Johnson. With often-injured centers like Lanier, or foul-happy starters such as Darryl Dawkins, Parish, or Tree Rollins, backups must be ready to play 20 to 25 minutes.

The classic strategy calls for the starting center to play the first 14 minutes of the game. Center B then plays five to six minutes until the starter is reinserted for a strong rush toward halftime. With a healthy, foul-free starter, the ideal second-half rotation is 10 minutes for Center A and seven to nine for Center B. If the game is still up for grabs, then the starting center plays till the final buzzer.

Above all, the perfect backup center must be satisfied with his status. A team can be destroyed when its two big men crunch each other in practice, both vying for the same time and money. "I like my contract," says Clemon Johnson. "And I'm very happy to be the backup for the best center in basketball."

If the players are better than ever, the technology is booming, and NBA games are more complicated than pro football. Some NBA strategies involve No. 1 Guards, No. 2 Guards, No. 3 Guards, and No. 4. There are big littlemen and little bigmen. Flex offenses. Single and double stacks. Injury lists and arthro-surgeons. The 12 Back and the 4 Down. "I have no opinion about a ball game," Larry Costello used to say when he coached Milwaukee, "until I see the game films."

Professional hooping has become so complex that even second- and third-string centers must specialize their game plans. Sometimes Kareem Abdul-Jabbar is replaced by Swen Nater—for rebounding and stability. Nater is a pale imitation of Kareem. And should the Lakers wish to pick up the tempo, perhaps play catch-up, then Bob McAdoo replaces Kareem. A wiry 6'10", McAdoo can ride the crest of a fastbreak, shooting first and never asking questions.



Clemon Johnson keeps Philly moving when Moses sits down.

For the Chicago Bulls, Johnson and Jawann Oldham share 20-plus minutes in support of Dave Corzine. Oldham's offense is brickish and accidental, while Johnson has a good move to the hoop. On the uphill end of the court, Oldham is an aspiring shot-blocker, defending against high-scoring backups such as McAdoo — while Johnson, who is foul-prone, can only be trusted to defend against crooked-shooting backups like Webster. Who does coach Kevin Loughery need most tonight? How many fouls does Corzine have? What's the score? The time? Who's on the floor? What city is this? . . .

On every team, the specialty of the backup is obviously related to the specific skills of the starting center—as when Phoenix sends 6'9" Alvan Adams into a game for 7'1" James Edwards. The burly Edwards forever looms in the low post, rolling his hook shots, angling his jumper. Conversely, Adams takes his spot-shots and his passing game to the other side of the foul line, leaving the pivot to be filled by Maurice Lucas or Larry Nance. "Every new look

presents another problem for the other guys," says Hubie Brown. "The more stuff you can bring off the bench the more you can influence the direction of a ball game."

With each passing season the pro game is played higher and higher above the rim. Year by year the defensive rotation gets quicker, more precise . . . Pin the ball against the baseline, double-team a center with a guard . . . As points become harder to find in the lane, teams must strive for "cheap baskets"—available only on the run, or else snatched with force off the offensive boards. Several teams have even revived a policy of the '60s—playing two centers at the same time. The heyday of Reed and Bellamy, Chamberlain and Thurmond, Hayes and Unseld. Now it's Malone and Johnson. McHale and Parish. Benson and Laimbeer. Sacrificing speed and defense for meaty picks and power on the boards.

If some teams have centers to spare, others are compelled to include erstwhile backups in their starting lineups. Such is the case with 6'9" Pat Cummings, who attends to the center jump for Dick Motta's upstart Mavericks.

Another misplaced starting center is 6'9" Dan Issel of the Denver Nuggets. On offense, Issel surmounts taller centers with long-range jumpers, or circumvents them with clever moves to the hoop. But like Cummings, Issel's foreshortened defense is a fatal liability. "Both Issel and Cummings are better suited to power forward," says a rival coach. "Normal-size centers can easily wear them down, and as Cummings and Issel get tired their defense gets even worse. The only center play they deserve is backup time. We try to stay close to Dallas and Denver, then attack their centers in the endgame."

THE POLY-CENTERED BUCKS can play 20 different combinations of big men. Most often, Bob Lanier starts at center, measuring a massive 6'11", 275 pounds, showing irresistible hooks and remarkably gentle jumpers. Too bad Lanier is also the all-time NBA leader in knee surgeries with seven . . . Here comes Lanier rumbling down the lane—the Bucks can run a play-and-a-half before he nestles into the pivot. Then Maurice Cheeks suddenly swipes Junior Bridgeman's dribble and swiftly the game reverses direction. But Lanier's knees are throbbing and there's an ache in each arthritic toe. With 2:19 left in the quarter, his time is coming to an end. Slowly, Lanier wheels and lumbers downcourt, chasing a championship ring . . .

Whenever the regular season starts to grind, Lanier eases his afflictions with an occasional day off. While Lanier recuperates, Alton Lister sometimes starts at center. Lister's vital dimensions are 7'0" and 230 pounds. "A natural center," notes Coach X, "with aggressive defense. However, Lister isn't strong enough and he can be used inside. He does show flashes of potential, especially on offense, and the Bucks hope he's the heir apparent to Lanier. So far, Lister's been too inconsistent."

To augment Lister's center time, coach Don Nelson often starts him at power forward alongside Lanier. Paul Mokeski never starts—playing mostly as first backup to Lanier or Lister.

Milwaukee's fourth center gets the least time—Randy Breuer, a leansome 7'3", 230-pound rookie from Minnesota. Breuer's assets are his size, a decent touch around the hoop, and two large elbows. Occasionally, he gains valuable experience with a start at center. Thin and weak, Breuer is a model to test the truth of an evergreen NBA tradition: "Look at a guard for a year, at a forward for two, but always give a big man at least three years."

The fifth Milwaukee center is the reigning Dean of NBA Backups—the venerable Harvey Catchings. Over a 10-year career, Catchings has subbed for the meek and the mighty, including Lanier, Kent Benson, George Johnson, Darryl Dawkins, along with the Ancient Marathoner, Leroy Ellis. Catchings stands 6'9", 220 pounds, and his dossier bulges with information: "Very bad hands. Not very strong—can be overpowered in the post. Can't shoot. Ignore his offense and send your center to help somewhere else." Despite his blatant faults, Catchings earns a steady wage blocking shots, stealing passes, and grabbing offensive rebounds.

If Catchings is the NBA's senior backup, who then is the best? Kevin McHale gets the most votes. "Kevin can block shots," says Houston's coach Bill Fitch. "He can play defense, rebound, and he can score with his back to the basket. Nobody's better. But Kevin averages almost 30 minutes a game. He's really an all-purpose player who sometimes plays as a backup center."

Clemon Johnson is another popular choice. "A post player with a dangerous turnaround jumper," says a former teammate. "Very physical and a surprisingly good shot-blocker for 6'9". Even so, Clem is so short that a big center can always eat his lunch."

Mike Gminski is rapidly earning respect. "Only average hands," says one coach. "An average passer who always looks to make the correct pass. Good recognition skills. Understands team concepts. I think Gminski is a sensational backup. And Gminski gets to play 20 minutes a game while the refs try to tame Dawkins."

The only other backup with significant support is Washington's Tom McMillen, a 6'11" graybeard celebrated for his versatility and excellent defense.

Various coaches propose San Antonio's Mark McNamara as the NBA's least effective backup. Coach Y explains: "McNamara didn't play much as a rookie in back of Malone and Clemon Johnson. And in San Antonio, Gilmore is good for 35 minutes anyway. So McNamara is still very uncomfortable on the court. Thinking instead of doing. So nervous out there that he misses easy shots."

As the season weighs heavier on Gilmore's shoulders, the Spurs are frantic to find relief. "They've tried Dave Batton and Edgar Jones," Coach Y reports. "They've had Bob Miller up from the CBA. They even resurrected Dave Robisch. But the Spurs better find somebody quick, or Gilmore might be all used up by the playoffs."

PLAYOFF COMPETITION MAKES furious demands of big men, and Hubie Brown tells why: "You play one team exclusively. Three times a week. Four to seven games in succession. So each of you knows the other guy's sets and plays. There's also less traveling done. That means more practice time to make adjustments and counteradjustments. So your normal offense usually gets jammed. The first and second options don't work. Now you have to go to your third option. Or if the clock is winding down, then let somebody go one-on-one. Either way, position becomes all important and play is extremely physical."

During postseason play, a rough-and-tumble style is also encouraged by the league's officials. "The playoffs are the NBA's showcase," says Coach X. "The refs have to make sure the competition is top-notch. Nobody ever wants to see a playoff game won on the foul line."

Come the playoffs, with almost 100 games played since training camp, most players are nagged with bruises and lingering strains. Elbows are wielded with impunity, and starting centers soon grow weary. Playoff teams also sport the league's finest starting centers, so all the big men are more troubled than ever with fouls. "Backup centers are gold in the playoffs," says Hubie Brown.

As the NBA playoffs unfold, look for Dr. J and Larry Bird, for Magic and Moses to highlight the evening news. But also look for backup centers to run amuck. Look for Clemon Johnson's corkscrew jumpers. Kevin McHale's shoulders. Rich Kelley's passing fancies. Don't be afraid to look at Harvey Catchings' deformed jump shot. In the playoffs, look for Paul Mokeski to throw away his chewing gum. ■

Contributing writer CHARLEY ROSEN, *6'8", has to go all the way on his articles; our next tallest writer is half a foot shorter.*

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Al Unser Sr. will race against Al Unser Jr. in the Indy 500 this month. Unusual? Yes. But the Unsers have always gone head-to-head, in everything from rowboats to cycles to Indy cars. Quarter is never asked, or given

Father vs.

By SHAV GLICK

BOBBY UNSER WAS THERE. SO was his brother Al. When two Indianapolis 500 champions are in the pits for a sprint car race in a place like Gardena, Calif., it draws some attention from the crowd. Also from the photographers.

Most of them were crowded around one sprint car—one of those beastly-looking racing machines that put out about 600 horsepower in a 1,300-pound package, are top-heavy and prone to catapulting end-over-end at the slightest bump. Bobby and Al were there, fussing over a tiny freckle-faced youngster who was in the driver's cage.

"Oh, isn't that cute? Bobby and Al are having their picture taken with that little boy," said the wife of one of the California Racing Association drivers who race regularly on the dirt half-mile at Ascot Park. "Won't his daddy be proud when he sees it. Those Unser brothers are so nice to pose like that."

Moments later, Bobby and Al were back where the crews gather to watch the start of Ascot's races. The pint-size "little kid" was still in the driver's seat, a blue helmet hiding the baby face and the mop of red hair that made him look like a 12-year-old. It couldn't hide the fact that he didn't weigh 100 pounds and at 5'2" he had to have a couple of pillows to see over the hood. But he sat tall in the saddle, befitting the name painted on the side of his helmet: UNSER.

Al Unser Jr. had just turned 18 and was driving in his first sprint car race in California. He had wanted to race a couple of years earlier, but state laws prevented it before his 18th birthday. He didn't win—he was disqualified for taking a short cut through the corners—but he displayed enough talent to convince the spectators they were in on something special. And they loved Little Al.

His father, three-time winner of the Indianapolis 500 and one of racing's most versatile drivers, smiled as the crowd cheered each time Little Al broadsided into the turns, churning dirt clods in all directions, and then gave him a standing ovation when he climbed out and took off his helmet.

"I don't remember hearing any noise like that even when I won a race," Unser Sr. said pensively. "That sounds more like it was Mario [Andretti] or A. J. [Foyt]. I'd win races and nothing much seemed to happen. Mario or A. J. would show up—the race wouldn't even be started—and the crowds would start screaming and yelling for them. That's the way it is for the boy. Everywhere he runs, as soon as he's introduced, the crowds go crazy, yelling and stomping their feet. Some people have it [charisma] and some don't, I guess. He does and I didn't."

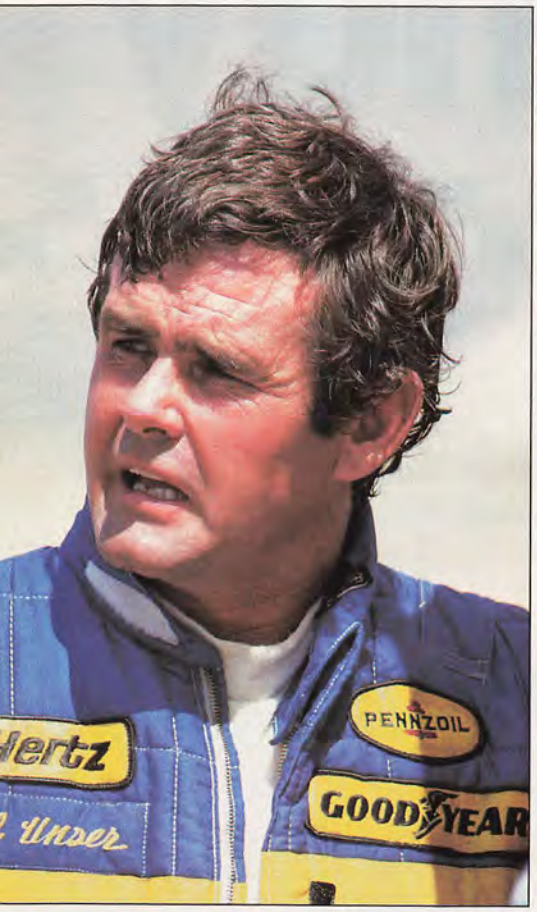
Back in Albuquerque, and in the buildings of Colorado's sprint car circuit, the sight of Little Al buckled in a sprint car was nothing new. After all, by the time he set out at 18 to conquer California, he had already won the

Big Al is not yet ready to let Little Al pass him.

Son at Indy

ROMAN WHEELS
VALVOLINE
GOODYEAR
Hertz
7
Hertz
GOODYEAR
Hertz
7

Al Sr.: 'It's tough being in the pits watching him race. It makes me damned nervous.'



Colorado points championship and driven in the no-holds-barred World of Outlaws circuit. He won his first professional race in a sprint car in August 1978 in Albuquerque. He was 16.

Today, as he approaches his second Indianapolis 500, Al Jr. is 22. The years have stretched him out a bit, clear up to 5'10" and a slender 150 pounds. His father will be 45 two days after the May 27 race.

"I still can't believe how fast he adjusted to different levels of racing," said the father. "When Al started racing sprint cars, I used to say that when he was ready to drive at Indy, it would be time for me to retire. I knew he had a lot of racing talent and desire, but I never dreamed he'd come along this quickly. I'm not about to retire yet, I love racing too much, but here he is."

THE UNSERS BECAME THE first father-son combination to drive in the same Indianapolis 500 last year. Eight father-and-son combinations have raced at the Speedway, but none of the others were in the same race. The first official race involving Al and Al Jr. came in a Championship Auto Racing Teams road race in 1982 at Riverside International Raceway when Al Jr. made his Indy-car debut; but since the day the elder Unser strapped his nine-year-old son in a go-kart, Little Al has known the meaning of being competitive. You're not an Unser unless you compete—in snowmobiles, motorcycles, three-wheelers, row boats, or plain old passenger cars. If there are two (or more) Unsers around at the same time—and there usually are—there's a race of some kind going on.

"Sure, I'm like any father, I'm apprehensive when Al is racing, but I know he's prepared and he knows how to handle himself. I'd probably feel different about it, except that I drove against my brother for so many years. We've gone wheel-to-wheel and head-to-head more times than I could remember. We never gave any quarter, and we never looked for any from each other, but we were brothers and we were the same family. I think having done that makes it a lot easier for me than for Mario, for instance."

Andretti, who raced against his son Michael for the first time last year, agrees.

"I don't know if I'll ever get over the feeling, but it's nerve-wracking when I'm out there [in a race] and Michael is racing, too," said Mario, a former Indianapolis 500 winner and world Formula One champion. "Frankly, I don't like the role. I experience emotions when I see him that I never experienced before. I feel concerned about him, but I'm racing, too, and there's nothing I can do to help him."

Unser says it's tougher watching from the sidelines when his son is racing than it is being in the race himself.

"Now that's the toughest thing in the world, watching him race, and me standing in the pits. It makes me a damned nervous wreck. I swear, I don't know how my mom watched all us boys race all those years."

Mom Unser, who died in 1975, lived to see two sons, Bobby and Al, win two Indianapolis 500s each. She also was at Indy when another son, Jerry, was killed practicing for the 500.

"Any man who does what he wants to do is very fortunate," Mom Unser said after Bobby won the rainy 1975 race, the last she would see. "As long as they are doing what they want to do, I am behind them 100%. I see so many frustrated men who never do what deep down in their hearts they want to do. I am glad my sons, all of them, have been successful doing what they want to do most."

She would have loved to watch her grand-

son race, because he is doing precisely what he wants to do.

"I could have chosen any profession, but I never gave a thought to any other one," said the first of racing's third-generation drivers. "I definitely want the name Unser to stay in racing."

And how does the younger Unser feel about racing against his father?

"When I'm in the car racing, I don't think I feel any different about him than I do any other driver in the race. If I can pass him, I will, just like I'd pass anyone else. I won't give him any extra room, but I won't make any moves on him I wouldn't make on other drivers. I know, though, when he's in a race, I can count on him always doing the right thing. He won't make any scary moves like some guys. Actually, I don't look at it as a big deal, because I've raced against him back home for as long as I can remember on bikes and snowmobiles and stuff like that."

When Al Jr. was first racing karts, his dad was his coach and motivator. Later, however, when the son began racing with professional teams, big Al kept more to the sidelines.

"Once Al learned the basics—how to stay out of trouble, how to drive in traffic, how to conserve your car, things that I'd learned over the years—I only stuck my nose in his business about one thing. I made sure he didn't drive any junk. I've seen a lot of young drivers, some of them good ones, get messed up by taking a ride in some equipment that wasn't first class. If there was any benefit in Al's being an Unser, it was my influence in making sure he drove for a good team and had good equipment.

"I kicked his butt a few times when he was in the karts. He'd win some races and get a little cocky and make mistakes, and I'd get on him pretty good. The first year he started racing sprint cars he started thinking he was A. J. Foyt, or maybe Bobby Unser, and I had to really sit on him. Since then, I can't say he's given me any problems, no more than any kid gives his dad."

AL JR. WAS STILL IN HIGH school when he turned professional. He was successful from the start—too successful for his britches.

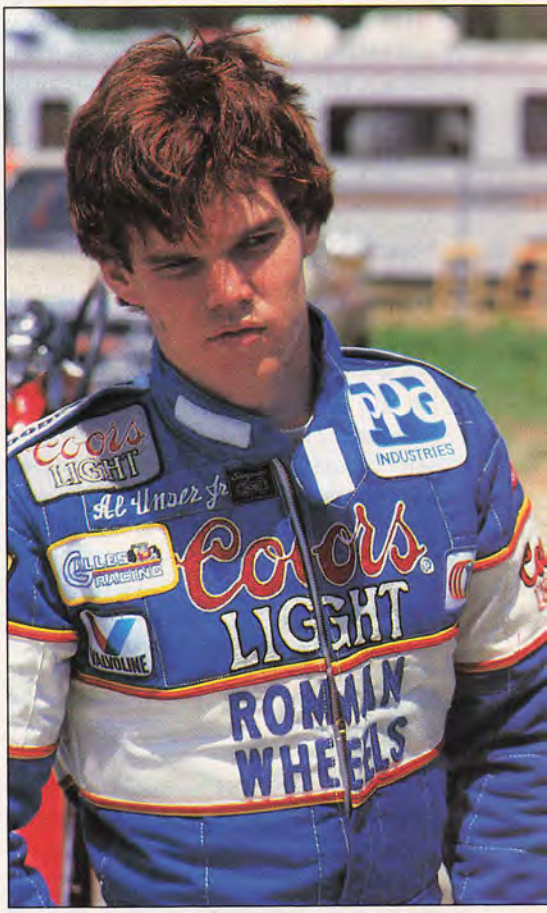
"I'd won a little money the first month I drove and I was feeling pretty good. It was in May and Dad was off in Indianapolis, so I decided I'd take a week or so off from school and have some fun. Well, when Dad found out about it, he grounded me. I mean, he said no racing, no nothing for three months. He wouldn't even let me come to Indy to see him race. I really felt bad about that, because he won it. I missed six or seven [sprint car] races while I was grounded, and when I came back, I finished fifth in the points. If I hadn't missed those races, I might have had a shot at the championship. But I'd learned that when Dad says something, he means it."

Another point where Al Sr. stepped in occurred two years ago, after Jr. had won the Sports Car Club of America's national Super Vee championship and was named SCCA professional rookie of the year. He and car owner Rich Galles, an Albuquerque car dealer and long-time friend of the Unser family, wanted to jump directly to Indy cars for the 1982 season.

"I thought he was moving a little too fast," Al Sr. recalls. "I sat down with Al and had a little talk and convinced him he ought to wait another year before tackling Indy. He wasn't ready. I think he knew it, too. He was just getting swept along, and I slowed him down."

It was during the Super Vee season that Al Sr. saw his son crash. Little Al recalls his father's reaction:

Al Jr.: 'I feel the same about him as I do any other driver. If I can pass him, I will.'



"We were testing at Phoenix and I was going into the first turn when the front right tire blew and I hit the fence head-on. The car was totaled. We just wrote it off. Dad had so much adrenaline that when he saw me, he jumped the guardrail and pulled the ligaments in his calf. He was limping around for a month. He was hurt more than me."

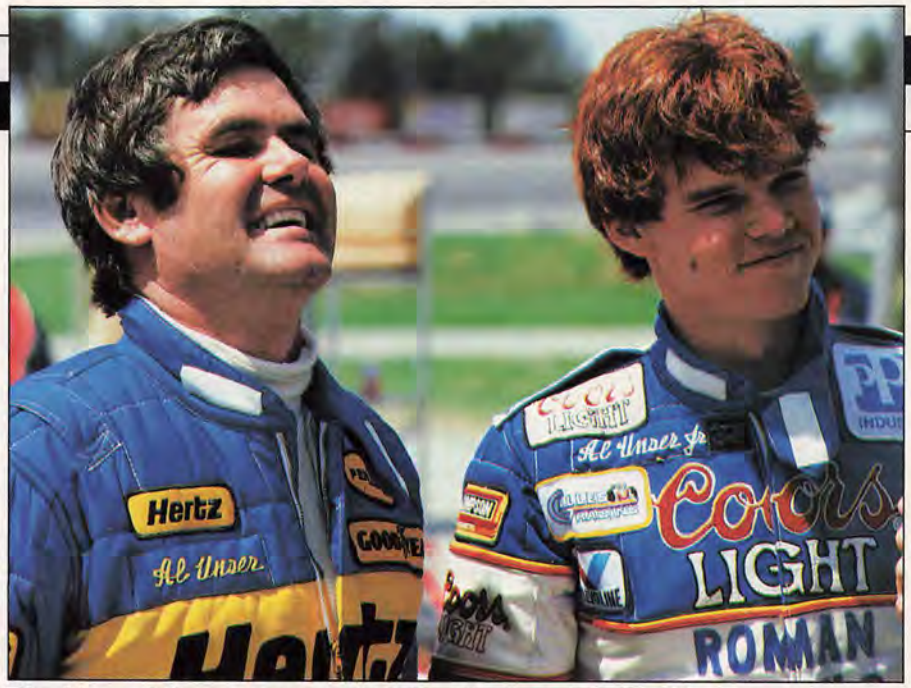
Galles and Al Jr. chose to tackle the Can-Am series in big-bore machinery that would give Al a feeling of Indy-car speed. So what did Little Al do? He won the first two races at Road Atlanta and Mosport against such veterans as two-time Can-Am champion Patrick Tambay, and two-time International Motor Sports Association sports car champion Al Holbert, and went on to win the series championship. Now there was nothing left but Indy cars.

The progression up from sprint cars to Super Vees to Can-Am was ideal in preparing for Indianapolis. Sprint cars taught him to be aggressive, to fight wheel-to-wheel for every inch, and how to drive sideways. "Knowing how it feels to drive sideways is very important in an Indy car, because when you start to get loose [in a corner], you'd better know the feeling so you can adjust," he said. "If you've only driven sports cars, you probably won't recognize the feeling." Super Vees, lighter and nimbler, and as different from a sprint car as a Jaguar is from a Jeep, taught him the feeling of driving on pavement with a rear-engine machine. The cars are so close and so competitive, you have to learn to stay on top of things, to keep your foot in it, to stay up front."

Can-Am cars added the feeling of power, driving at the screaming high speeds that he would experience in an Indianapolis car.

Last year, he drove an Eagle Indy car prepared by Dan Gurney, a folk hero among American race drivers, who parlayed a racing career into building some of the world's fastest cars. After watching and working with Al Jr., Gurney called him "the coolest 21-year-old I've ever seen in racing."

LITTLE AL DIDN'T WIN A RACE last year—while his father was winning his second national championship—but he made his mark. Had it not been for the remarkable Italian, Teo Fabi, Al would have been rookie of the year in the finest crop of newcomers to hit Indy since 1965, when his father, Andretti, Gordon Johncock, Jerry Grant, and George Snider made their debuts. He finished second twice, behind Fabi in the Pocono 500 and Andretti at Elkhart Lake, and in the top 10 in 11 of 13 races to wind up seventh in the CART/PPG Indy Car World Series standings.



Big Al won't be surprised if Little Al wins at Indy this year.

His most memorable race, however, was the Indianapolis 500, where he finished 10th but was a part of the drama when he apparently attempted to block Tom Sneva and prevent him from passing his father during the final laps of the race. The situation was this: After both Unser Sr. and Sneva pitted for fuel for the last time while the field was slowed for a yellow caution period, racing was about to resume on lap 177 (out of 200) with Al Sr. in the lead, followed by Sneva and Al Jr., who was several laps behind. Suddenly Al Jr. darted past both drivers in an illegal move while the yellow caution light was still on, then dropped back between his father and Sneva.

As the race neared its end, Sneva made several attempts to pass the younger Unser and give chase to Unser Sr., but each time Little Al's Eagle filled up the race track.

"He was racing fair and square if he'd been racing for the lead," Sneva said later, "but he had passed both of us on the yellow flag and should have been black-flagged [called in for a penalty], or else he should have let me by so I could race for the lead. He should have honored the move-over flag. When you're five laps behind, you shouldn't dictate how the race is going to be decided."

Sneva, in much the dominant car, finally got by his youthful antagonist and quickly surged past the elder Unser to win his first Indianapolis 500, after three times finishing second. After the race, Al Jr. was penalized two laps for illegally passing during the yellow caution period, but he defended his actions in keeping his Eagle between Sneva and his father for as long as he could.

"I thought it would be a nice birthday present for my dad if I could help him win his fourth Indy," quipped the youngster. Later, when he was quoted as saying he "wanted to mess Tom up," his comments were blistered by the racing fraternity, who felt it was rather brash of a rookie to deliberately try to "mess up" one of racing's most popular drivers. Like so many quotes captured in the heat of deadlines, in the frantic seconds following a dramatic event, a tiny word was lost in the translation. What Al Jr. said—or meant to say—was that he wanted to mess up Tom's air. Not Tom.

"I didn't do anything wrong, I didn't get in his way when he tried to pass," Little Al reiterated recently. "I did want my dad to win that race, though. I'll never deny that. I was just trying to keep the air as turbulent as I could for Sneva, and make it tougher on him."

This year, Al Jr. and the Galles Racing team have switched from Gurney's Eagle and will be at Indianapolis with a new March 84C, the latest state-of-the-art machine from Robin Herd's plant in England. Last December, Unser, Galles, and team manager Huey Absalom visited the March plant and bought two new cars.

"We drove the '83 March in a couple of races last year [including Pocono] and I liked the way it handled, so Rich [Galles] and I decided it was the way to go this year. It's handled fabulous in our testing. We're ready to race."

Ironically, both Unsers could wind up driving the same March model. The Roger Penske team of Al Sr. and Rick Mears is entered in the 500 with a couple of new Penske PC-12s, but Penske is taking no chances on the team having the difficulties it had last year with the PC-11s. He bought a pair of March 84Cs—just in case.

"We're hoping last year was just one of those things," said Al Sr., who nursed his ill-handling car to enough high finishes, including his only win in the Cleveland road race, to edge rookie Fabi for the season championship. "All year we expected to work it [handling problems] out, but we never found the handle and switched to the older car [PC-10] late in the year. We had to stay ahead in the points.

"This year's car won't look a whole lot different to the eye, but there's a lot of changes out of sight. The suspension has been changed drastically. We hope all for the better."

If not, out will come the March 84Cs.

THE ELDER UNSER, WHO throughout his career has been reticent to talk about himself, has no such qualms when it comes to talking about his son.

"It wouldn't surprise me one bit if Al won this year. Even at Indy. He came so close [to winning a race] last year, he showed signs of being able to do it. He's got a year under his belt, and if everything goes his way, it could happen. Of course, if everything went their way, it could happen for about 30 other guys, too. But I'll admit, Al continually surprises me. I think he surprised all of us, coming on the way he has. I'll be very proud of him when he wins. Heck, I'm very proud of him right now."

Who wouldn't be proud of a young man who, when asked how he felt being called Junior, replied: "I like it. Who wouldn't if his father was a three-time winner of the Indy 500? I've been known as Al Unser's son as long as I've raced, so why not be Al Unser Jr. I don't want anyone to forget my father."

To help make sure there will always be an Al Unser, Al Jr. and his wife, Shelley, named their son Al. This, of course, made Big Al a grandfather. A proud one.

"It's neat, having Al and Shelley and the baby come over to our place," said Al Sr., who lives out along Route 66 on the outskirts of Albuquerque, five miles or so from the new house Al Jr. built on the banks of the Rio Grande. "We get to play with the kid, get him to crying and fussing, and then we can send them home."

Sounds like all the other grandfathers you know, doesn't he? He is—until he flips the visor down on his helmet and the engine in his Indy car roars to life. Then it's race driver against race driver. Unser vs. Unser. Only now it's not brother vs. brother, it's father vs. son. ■

SHAV GLICK, *an award-winning writer for* The Los Angeles Times, *says it's just as difficult to keep up with the Unsers off the track as on the track.*

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America's Weapon: The Breland Bomber

By JIM SMITH

With a wingspan of 78 inches, and packing a big punch, he'll waste all welterweights

THERE ARE FEW SURE THINGS in life. Mark Breland is one of them. Barring an injury in training, a freak cut, or an act of God, Breland will win a gold medal on August 11 for the United States at the Olympic Games in Los Angeles. After that, the script calls for him to turn pro, take the welterweight title, replace Sugar Ray Leonard as boxing's biggest attraction, win millions of dollars, and retire from the ring after about five years to a lucrative acting career.

"He's definitely at the same stage as Sugar Ray was in '76," said Rolly Schwartz, 70, chief of officials for the U.S. Amateur Boxing Federation. "Mark's the outstanding amateur boxer in the U.S. He has the height [6'2"] of a Tommy Hearns, a tremendous right hand—one of the best I've ever seen coming out of the amateur ranks—good mobility, good jab. He's probably a more devastating puncher than Leonard. Sugar had a better left hook. Breland has a better right hand. But both are quiet, dedicated athletes. Both were supremely confident [as Olympic hopefuls] and in magnificent shape."

Breland, who turns 21 on May 11, expected to be 99-1 as an amateur after becoming the first five-time Golden Gloves champion in New York in March. He never has lost in international competition and has decisioned his top two Olympic gold medal contenders at 147 pounds—the Soviets' Serik Konakbaev and Cuba's Candelario Duvergel.

"I'm confident," said Breland, who is from the decayed Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn. "I've seen them both fight a few times since I fought 'em [in 1982]. They looked the same. Nothing's really changed. Most likely, they'll have to fight each other [at the Olympics]. I think Konakbaev will beat Duvergel. And I beat him [Konakbaev] already, so . . ."

The only problem Breland faces going into the June 4-10 Olympic Trials in Fort Worth, Texas, is *over*confidence. But Olympic boxing coach Pat Nappi will see to that. "According to him," Breland said, "I'm never in shape, I never look good, I don't train hard." Of course, Herb Brooks didn't give the U.S. hockey team much credit in 1980, and it won the gold medal at Lake Placid.

"People say I'm a 'sure-shot,'" Breland said. "It's been written in a lot of magazines. Every time I turn around, my name pops up. It's like I'm the only hope. That keeps me training hard, gives me something to live up to. If I do it, I'll make everybody a believer, and make myself a believer.

"Most of the world champions, the great ones, won the Olympics first," he said, referring to the likes of Floyd Patterson, Cassius Clay, and Ray Leonard. "To win the Olympics, you have to start at the bottom. Then you can call your own shots. What I want right now is to become a great amateur boxer. It seems like everything [in American sports] is 'pro.' When I go to a gym, people ask me if I'm a pro or an amateur. When I say 'amateur,' they say, 'Oh,' like it's nothing. I want people to look up to me in amateur boxing as they look up to Sugar Ray Leonard in professional boxing."

ALTHOUGH BRELAND IS A product of a ghetto, no up-from-the-ghetto crusade propelled him into boxing. His father, Herbert, is a construction foreman. His mother, Luemisher, raised four boys and two girls. The parents did a good job. One of Breland's older brothers, Earl, is in the Army, stationed in Germany. Herbert Jr., 28, is a lawyer. One sister is a nurse. Breland has never been in trouble with the law. When he speaks he sounds like a model citizen.

"I never was a street fighter," Breland said. "I wanted to be an actor. I used to look at a lot of Perry Mason shows. I thought I might want to be a lawyer, until I saw how many books my brother had to read."

None of the Breland boys ran with street gangs. They all respected their father, who helped them blossom despite their surroundings.

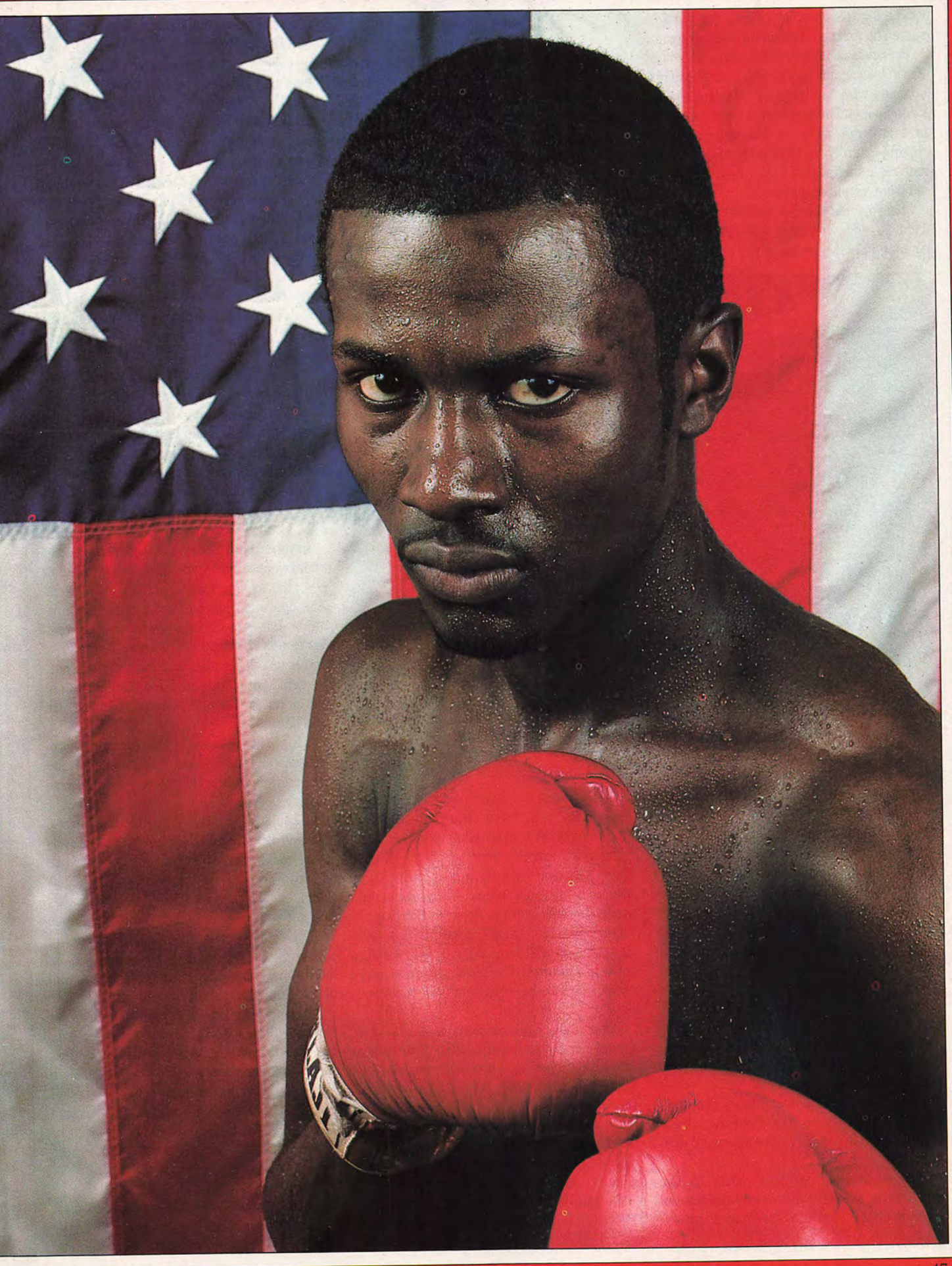
"What he said, went," Breland said. "Sometimes I'd be coming home from my road work when he was getting up to go to work. I'd want to go with him, but he wouldn't let me. He said it'd be too tough for me. You look at him—he's about 5'7", 155 pounds—and you wonder how he does it. I've seen him lifting heavy stuff like it was nothing."

At the age of seven, Breland watched Joe Frazier beat Muhammad Ali on closed-circuit television at Madison Square Garden. The boy remembered how clean Ali's face was, how tired Frazier looked, but that Frazier won the fight. "I always said that I'd like to do that to somebody," Breland said quietly. "Come out looking OK and the other guy looks battered. But you can never tell [about the verdict]."

A man named "Goat" bought Breland his first pair of boxing gloves and held a tournament in the project. Breland was nine. He won it. To do so, he had to beat his brother Earl, who was two years older.

"He knocked me down," Breland said, "but I won the fight. It was in a hallway. We was rumbling. About 30 people were watching. We had had a fight before that. I busted his nose. He got mad, threw his gloves down and ran after me. He said he was going to kill me. I ran up to my mother. He came in with blood all over him. She said we shouldn't box if it

'It's time for a new fighter. I can be better than Sugar Ray.'



was going to end up in a fight. But we both signed up for the tournament and met again."

Breland said he was encouraged to fight by Kevin Isaacs, a heavyweight from the neighborhood who had fought Larry Holmes and Leon Spinks. Breland was 13 when he had his first amateur fight, at Manhattan's Lunar Boxing Club. Now, Breland is known for his incredible composure in the ring. But it was different when he started.

"I always did the 'Ali Shuffle,'" he said. "I used to do everything he did—the bolo, running in place, sticking my chin out. . . .

"Some guy offered me $500,000 in stocks and bonds," Breland said. "I met him one day while I was running in Prospect Park. I told him, 'I'll let you know.' Another guy came to my house, brought my father cigars and my mother flowers. He spread out a big blueprint on the table and said, 'I'll give you $5 million if you turn pro.' The blueprint was for a stadium in New Jersey that wasn't even built yet. He said, 'If this works out, half of it's yours.'"

'I know how it feels to lose. I don't like it. It's real bitter.'

My first fight, I just went out like a girl throwing wild punches. I had a lot of energy. I was really nervous. I had to get out there and get the feeling of being hit and hitting."

He has been guided by his coach, George Washington, a former Joe Louis sparring partner who had a 100-14 pro record and now works in Breland's corner with trainer Artie Cintron. Breland has been off his feet five times. His only defeat was a 3-2 decision to Daryl Anthony, now a pro, in 1981.

Rock promoter Shelly Finkel, 39, who will manage Breland when the fighter turns pro, met him at the Golden Gloves in 1980. Finkel has handled tours for The Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, and Diana Ross, and organized the Watkins Glen festival in 1973, which attracted 600,000 people. Finkel currently manages WBC junior-welterweight champion Johnny (Bump City) Bumphus and middleweight Alex Ramos.

Breland says he has had 15 offers to turn pro, but on Finkel's advice, and because of his own desire to win the Olympics, turned them down.

Breland waited.

"He's going to have a limited career," Finkel said, "whether it's five years, eight, or 10. So I want to plan for what he can do later. I think we learned from watching Howard Davis that you have to fight in order to be great. And you'll never be great unless you're tested. Mark is going to fight creditable opponents, people with names—who are going to test him: a southpaw, a bull, a mover, a puncher. . . Within three years, I expect him to be ready for the championship."

After that, Breland plans to win a lot of money defending his title, then retire and go into acting full-time. He already has played a major role in the film "Lords of Discipline," for which he reportedly received $30,000, and turned down what was believed to be a $2 million, three-year contract from Paramount Studios. Breland said he did not want acting to interfere with his boxing.

In "Lords of Discipline," Breland played Pearce, the first black cadet at a southern military college, who was subjected to racial bigotry. The casting director for the film had seen Breland's photo in *The New York Times* and called to offer him a tryout. Breland, who never had an acting lesson, passed the test.

"I didn't think I did as well as people said I did," Breland said of his first movie role. "I don't know too much about acting. I spoke to Sean Connery when I was in England, because his son was in the movie. I asked him how it feels looking at your own movies, and he said he didn't like to do it. When I saw it, I said, 'That's not me.' Me and the character were very similar. We're both easygoing. But he took a lot of beatings to get through the school. I believe it would have been tough on me to take all that abuse. Someone woulda got hit."

THERE WAS A TIME LAST YEAR when Breland thought all his dreams might crumble. He had been bothered since 1980 by a sore right hand and soaked his knuckles after each fight. In 1981, a doctor told him he needed an operation. Breland kept putting it off. "I was scared," he said. "I didn't think I'd be able to fight again."

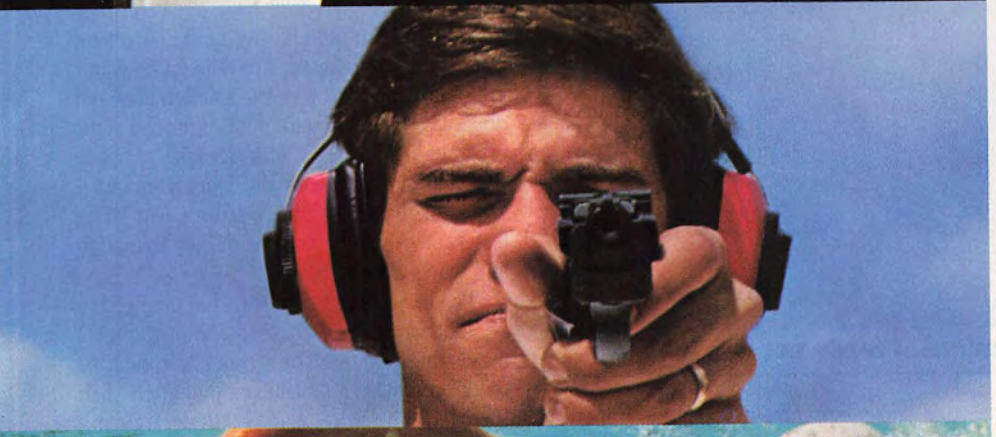
In June 1983, Breland finally relented. He underwent surgery to repair a torn tendon near the second knuckle of his right hand. The operation forced him to miss last summer's Pan-American Games in Caracas, Venezuela. Breland spent several weeks at home, unable to train, with his hand in a cast. He could not cut his food. He needed help to put on his clothes. He listened to music. He was depressed.

"He was very anxious," his mother, whom friends call "Mish," said. "You could see he still wanted to box. He played his music to occupy his mind."

"I couldn't do anything for four months," Breland said. "When the cast finally came off, I still couldn't box. I could run. I could work the bag with my left hand. But I couldn't bend my [surgically repaired] finger. I didn't think it would ever come around. But I was able to fight against Ireland last October [in Concord, Calif.] and it didn't bother me. In November, I fought in the tournament. It still didn't bother me and I figured it was OK."

Breland was named amateur boxer of the year for the second straight year in 1983 by the U.S. Amateur Boxing Federation after he won his four bouts, stopping three foes in Colorado Springs to defend his 147-pound ABF national title. Since he had decisioned Duvergel (4-1) in 1982, Breland passed up a chance to fight the Cuban again in Reno on February 18 when the Cubans beat the U.S. team, 8-4.

"Winning five Golden Gloves means a lot to me," Breland said, "because nobody's ever done it. There's more pressure on me now



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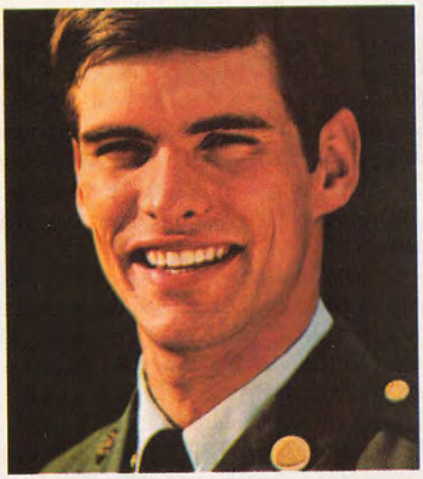

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because I'm trying to set my own records. After the Gloves, I'll be looking forward to the Olympics. Right now, I'm just doing it for the glory. Later on, it will be a job."

ON A WINTER SUNDAY, BRELAND sat in the living room of a friend on Linden Blvd. in Brooklyn, reminiscing and also looking ahead. He was to defend his world amateur welterweight title in April against Luciano Bruno of Italy. Then he will train for the Olympic Trials in June, the Olympic Box-Off in Las Vegas July 6-7, probably against Louis Howard of St. Louis. After that, the Games—July 29 to August 11.

Breland figures he'll have no trouble getting past Howard, whom he has beaten. "He fought Konakbaev and he got beat," Breland said of Howard. He fought Duvergel and got whipped. To me, he's finished. He's been through so many wars. He's very strong, but if you move on him, he don't have no type of balance."

Breland figured he might have been more interested in football if he had passed a test to attend Brooklyn Tech. But when he fell just short academically, he was forced to attend Eastern District High School, which does not have a football team. He played defensive end on a Pop Warner team as a teenager and often got into fights with opponents who called him "Stringbean." His 78-inch reach is greater than that of most heavyweights and a tremendous advantage in the ring.

"I like boxing because it's a one-on-one sport," Breland said. "If you lose, you can't blame it on anybody. It's all up to you."

Breland said he trains several times a week at the Bedford-Stuyvesant Boxing Club, but has been discouraged because usually nobody wants to spar with him. He makes frequent trips to the famed Kronk Gym in Detroit, which is managed by Emanuel Steward. Breland indicated that Steward will be in his corner and possibly a part of his management group eventually.

Breland has excellent balance. He also feels he has a mental edge on foes. He uses yoga and meditation to clear his mind and help him focus on tasks. "I started in '79," Breland said. "I work with Marvin Fleming [a yoga instructor]. We do a lot of stretching, working on breathing techniques. . .It helps me a lot, keeps me relaxed, keeps my mind clear.

'Sometimes I imagine I'm a wild animal. I really get into it.'

"Sometimes," Breland said, "I think about wild animals when I'm meditating. I got a Doberman. I think about him a lot. Last year, I was looking in a mirror before a fight and I was thinking about a wild bear. All of a sudden, there was like hair on my face. I really get heavy into it." He was serious.

The comparisons with Leonard are inevitable. Breland handles them well. "People look up to Sugar Ray for winning the Olympics and all his titles," Breland said. "I hope to be in the same position after the Olympics when I turn pro. Then I can do things similar to what he's doing. But I want to be looked up to as Mark Breland.

"When I turn pro," he said, "my first fight is going to be in the Garden, and it's going to be for free. I want to give free tickets to the people who followed me in the Gloves for five years and supported me. I know a lot of people want to be there. This will be my way of showing my appreciation. . .Eventually, I'd like to try to win titles in other divisions, like junior-middleweight and middleweight.

"And I want to do some things for the community," Breland said. "I'd like to build projects in Brooklyn, schools for underprivileged children, maybe an old folks home, help renovate other buildings. I look at people who've made a lot of money and they really don't seem to care about where they grew up or the people around them. I feel like people supported me and I want to say I did something for them when I leave."

Breland said he plans eventually to buy a home for his parents in Denmark, S.C., where the family has relatives. "Sooner or later," he said, "you get to the point where you have to start worrying about them. People might see me wearing jewelry, or know that I'm making money, and end up doing something. I'd like to make sure that they're secure so I don't have to worry about anything.

"I feel like if I fulfill my goals," Breland said, "I can be relaxed. I'm relaxed now, but in the future I can be relaxed with millions of dollars. I want to make a lot of money right from the beginning. It may not take 15 fights to get a title fight. It might happen sooner. I know I felt I could have beaten Colin Jones last year. It's just a matter of how things go and who's got the title.

"I'd like to fight Sugar Ray. I'm pictured to be another Tommy Hearns—even though I move different and he's much stronger. I think I might be a more exciting fighter than Hearns, though. And I think fighting Leonard would be the biggest match of all.

"I'm not going to get into anything before I'm ready," Breland said. "Like Davey Moore wasn't ready to fight Duran. I don't want any fight where I'm not ready but where I'm going to make a million dollars. Well, maybe for a million I'd get in there. But I know how it feels to lose. I don't like it. It's real bitter. Something you don't even like to think about. When you lose, you feel like people are turning their backs on you, even though it might not be that way.

"I know one day there's going to be bloody eyes and a swollen face. But it's got to be for big bucks. I want a title or a shot at a title. There's got to be something there that's worth the pain." With the hurts, will come the benefits of celebrity.

"When Leonard beat Duran and Hearns, be became another Muhammad Ali. Everybody wanted to hear what he was going to do next. He opened himself up, and people like that. I keep a lot of things to myself. If I have a press conference before a fight and the other guy brags about how he's going to do

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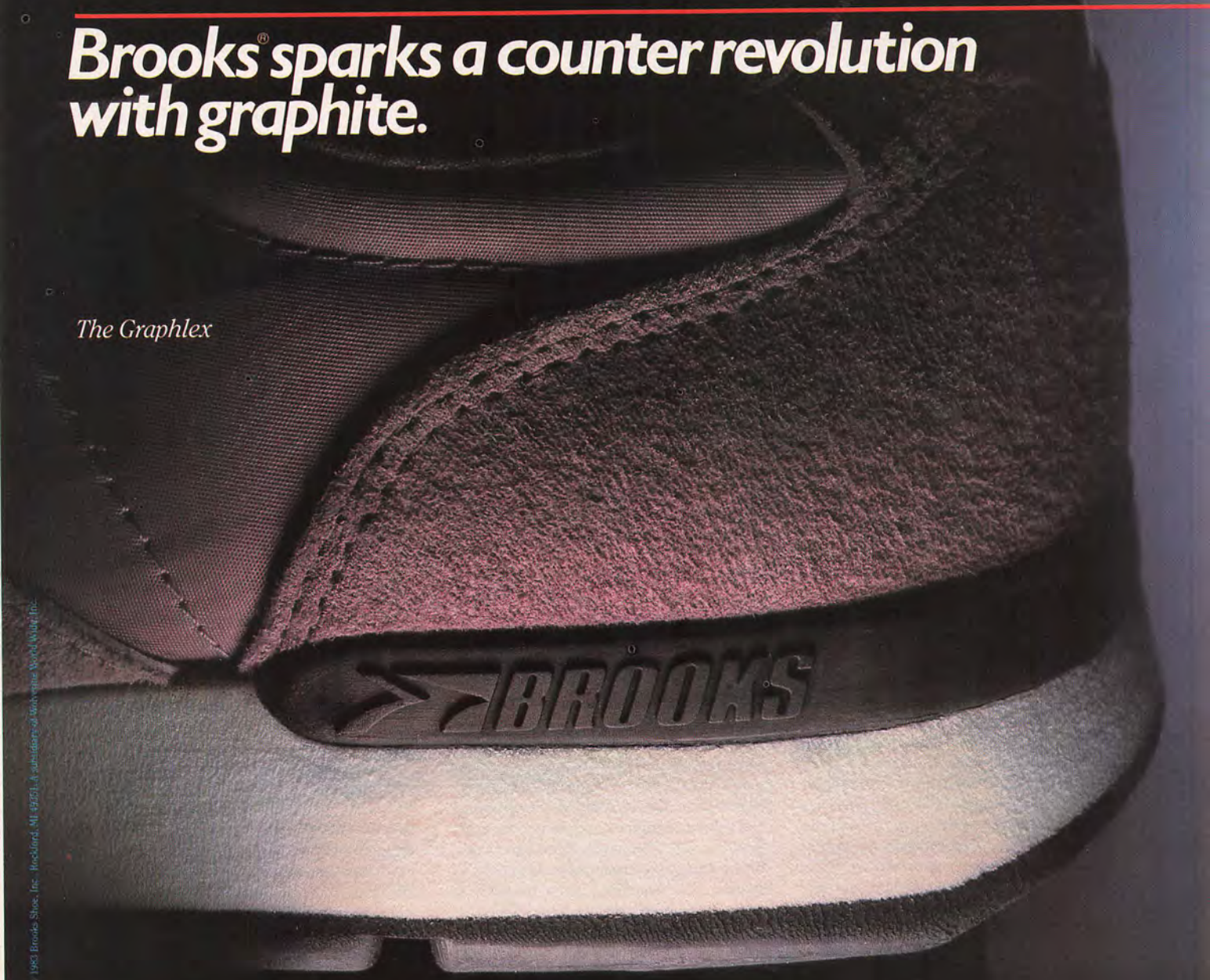

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this and that, I'll just say, 'The ring talks.'

"I would love for people to go for me like Sugar Ray," Breland said. "It's a new era. Sugar Ray's going out. He's not finished yet, but he's going out, sooner or later. It's time for a new fighter to come up. If things go the way I hope they will, I think I can be better than Sugar Ray [as boxer and media star]—if I really open up. I've got to grab people's attention, get across to people. That's one thing Leonard's good at. I'll have to work on it. I'm really a shy person. I'd have to overcome that.

"In order to get a certain position in life," he said, "you can't always do the things you want to do. You have to sacrifice. That's what I'm doing now. I don't party much. I miss hanging out with friends. But when you're in crowds, bad things can happen. I have to watch what I say and do. When I go out, I like to go to Scales, in my neighborhood. It's a nice, clean place where you can get dressed and go out to dinner without any rowdy people hanging around.

The only place Breland likes to get rowdy is in the ring. ■

Contributing writer JIM SMITH *can almost match Breland's 78-inch wingspan, but he's 35 pounds too heavy to be a welterweight. Jim's last I.S. piece previewed the NFL draft.*

Other U.S. Boxing Weapons

THE REST OF THE 1984 U.S. OLYMpic Boxing team appears to be as strong as America's 1976 team, which took five gold medals, a silver, and a bronze in Montreal. Besides Mark Breland, many U.S. amateur boxing observers believe that Paul Gonzales, Pernell Whitaker, and Tyrell Biggs have chances to bring home the gold from Los Angeles. And Meldrick Taylor, Ricky Womack, Steve McCrory, and Todd Hickman also could win medals.

"We should be in a position to win eight medals," said Rolly Schwartz, 70, the architect of the '76 team and now chief of officials for the U.S. Amateur Boxing Federation. "It all depends on what happens in the trials and camps. And, of course, there's the draw. That's more important than people realize. The draw is blind. Nobody is seeded. So the top two fighters in a division could be going at each other right away."

Cuba has won nine of the 22 gold medals in the last two Olympics and also defeated the U.S. in 11 straight dual meets since 1977. Most American hopefuls in 1984 will have to get by a Cuban in order to have a shot at winning a medal.

As of March 1, 36 U.S. boxers had qualified for the 96-man Olympic Trials, which are to be held June 6-10 in Fort Worth, Texas. Olympic coaches Pat Nappi and Roosevelt Sanders were to be at the Western USA Open Boxing Championships in Sacramento May 1-4 with an eye toward filling the 60 other spots for the Trials. A "Box-Off" is to be held on July 6-7 in Las Vegas, pitting the top two boxers in each class, to produce America's roster for the Games, July 29-August 11.

Here is a rundown on the best American boxers, with help from Schwartz, the guru of U.S. amateur boxing:

106 pounds—Gonzales: "He's tall and rangy for a 106-pounder. He'll have the reach on anybody. He has boxed the best and beaten the best. Great attitude. I look for him to win [a gold]." Gonzales grew up in a barrio in Hispanic East Los Angeles and was vaguely attached to a street gang known as "First Flats." He was the only non-black on last summer's Pan-American Games team. He must outclass Jose Rosario of Jersey City first, then worry about South Korea's Kwang Sun Kim.

112 pounds—McCrory: The younger brother of WBC welterweight champ Milt McCrory is a member of Detroit's Kronk Boxing Team. He often feels unjustly treated but brings it on himself by being inconsistent. McCrory must decide whether he's a boxer or counterpuncher. He was invited to the Pan-Am Games only after Hickman failed to make the weight. He is the U.S. amateur champ and world flyweight champ, but lost a 5-0 decision to Cuba's Pedro Reyes on February 18. His main American competitor is Jesse Flores of San Antonio. "He needs somebody to put a firecracker under him," Schwartz said of McCrory. "He's lethargic sometimes. He boxes like he's going into a 15-rounder. He needs to be more dynamic."

119 pounds—Hickman: This Akron native needed to impress at the Westerns to qualify for the Trials. And he must surpass world titlist Floyd Favors, whose sprained ankle prevented him from boxing against Cuba on February 18. Jesse Benavides of Corpus Christi, Texas, Ronnie Tentz of Albuquerque, and Fernie Morales of El Paso, Texas, were early qualifiers at this weight. Hickman has beaten the Russian Yuri Alexandrov. "He's a tall, rangy kid," Schwartz said, "with very fast hands. He can punch like a whirlwind—with either hand. He could win a medal. He'll make weight at 119."

125 pounds—Taylor: This 18-year-old came from nowhere to upset three-time world champion Cuban Adolfo Horta, 3-2, on February 18. Horta had not lost since the finals of the 1980 Olympics. Nappi said of Taylor, who is from Philadelphia: "There's your 1984 Olympic gold medalist." Could be. Taylor ballooned from 112 and was ranked only eighth in the U.S. in his class at 139 last year, but took a silver medal at the junior world amateur boxing championships in Santo Domingo. Since dropping back to 125, he's gathered momentum. "He'd have to improve a lot to get the gold," Schwartz said. "He needs more experience. But he has fine potential. He needs work on his defense. He sometimes has a tendency to throw one hand and drop the other. But he has fine potential and could be a sleeper."

132 pounds—Whitaker: "Sweet Pea" has beaten Cuba's two-time Olympic gold medal winner Angel Herrera in four of five bouts. A lefty, he's a counterpuncher who isn't exciting but is effective. He got up off the canvas on February 18 to take a 3-2 decision from Herrera. Now he must outclass two-time U.S. lightweight champion Clifford Gray of Boynton Beach, Fla., who is enigmatic. "I think he's got a great shot to win a gold," Schwartz said of Whitaker. "He's a lefty who knows how to punch down the middle against a righty. He also has an excellent right hook."

178 pounds—Ricky Womack: "A two-handed banger," says Schwartz of the current U.S. champ, another Kronk fighter. "He's very flashy," Schwartz said. "Against a lethargic Russian [Vitaly Kachanovsky is the favorite], he could have enough to beat him. Womack is short, but he has heart and can take you out. Don't overlook him for a medal." Womack was an upset winner over Cuban world champ Pablo Romero last fall, but could not make the U.S. team for the February 18 Cuba match.

Superheavyweight—Biggs: He looked like a two-round fighter in losing a 3-2 decision to three-time Olympic gold medal winner Teofilo Stevenson of Cuba on February 18. Stevenson KOed Biggs in 1982. Some feel Biggs, 23, 6'5", 219 pounds, could beat Stevenson when they meet again. But Biggs also must worry about Italian pre-Olympic favorite Francesco Damiani, whom Biggs decisioned in Munich in 1983.

Stevenson is taller, at 6'6", and more muscular than Biggs, but is slowing at 32 and may be past his prime. The experts say that Biggs must get on his bicycle and jab Stevenson from a distance to beat him. If Biggs gets too close, Stevenson could drop him as he did on February 18 with a blow that Biggs felt was low. The referee disagreed.

"I'd rate Biggs and Stevenson dead even with Damiami, the favorite," Schwartz said. "Biggs has got to train hard to be in top shape because he's going to be moving twice the distance the other two will. Biggs is a pure boxer, not a classic puncher—very similar to Muhammad Ali. He must get guys off balance and pop-pop-pop them. He can win the gold if he can get in condition." J.S.

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The Spinks Jinx: Good As Gold

By ALLEN BARRA

Michael Spinks is a world champ, and may fight Larry Holmes, but nothing compares with the 1976 Olympics

THE HEADLINE ON MICHAEL Spinks' press release reads, "Michael Spinks: The Best In Boxing!" At first glance that may appear as the usual brand of management hype, especially since Spinks shares a common profession with Larry Holmes, Marvin Hagler, Roberto Duran, Aaron Pryor, Thomas Hearns, and Sugar Ray Leonard. But a close look at Spinks' record suggests that his credentials for the unofficial title of the best pound-for-pound fighter in the world may have some validity.

Michael Spinks began boxing at age 13 in a St. Louis recreation center. Even before his graduation from Vashon High School, he was recognized as an outstanding prospect, and after a spectacular amateur career that saw him win 93 of 100 bouts and the 1976 National Golden Gloves 165-pound title, Spinks went to Montreal as a member of the greatest of all U.S. Olympic boxing teams, a squad that also included future champions Leo Randolph, Sugar Ray Leonard, and Michael's brother, Leon. Michael won the 165-pound title with a third-round knockout of Russia's Rufat Riskiev and began a pro career 10 months later.

After several predictably quick victories over light-heavyweight trial horses, Spinks seemed a sure bet to capture at least one of the light-heavyweight crowns before his 23rd birthday. But soon after his name appeared in the list of top contenders, he took a voluntary hiatus from fighting and spent most of 1979 training and helping his brother Leon hold his own career together. When he returned to the ring, it was evident he had lost nothing; he quickly disposed of familiar veterans such as Ramon Ronquillo, Yaqui Lopez, Marvin Johnson, and Murray Sutherland, before finally gaining the WBA light-heavyweight crown in 1981 by outpointing Eddie Mustafa Muhammad.

Spinks scored five successive knockouts, mostly using the awesome right-hand punch he affectionately labels the "Spinks Jinx." He then decisioned WBC champion Dwight (Braxton) Muhammad Qawi in March 1983, to unify the light-heavyweight crown. Following a hard-fought decision over Eddie Davis in February, Spinks' pro record stands at 25-0.

For all the successes that have studded the last 10 years of his life, Michael Spinks has known his share of tragedy. In January of 1983, while Michael was in training for the Braxton fight, his wife, Sandy, was killed in an automobile accident. Spinks has assumed care of their now three-year-old daughter, Michelle, a subject of which he is understandably proud but nonetheless is reluctant to discuss with writers: the light-heavyweight champion is a jealous guardian of his daughter's—and his own—private life.

INSIDE SPORTS: Let me start with a criticism. I queried a number of prominent boxing people—fighters, writers, trainers, promoters—on the subject of Michael Spinks. The answers I got were almost a consensus: Talentwise, there seem to be no limits to what he can do; attitudewise, he may not have the desire of a truly great champion. What would you say to that?

MICHAEL SPINKS: Well, I think they say that because I don't charge across the ring at the opening bell and act like a mad dog, or something like that. Sometimes I get the feeling that's what people in sports mean by "desire." You put on a big show that people can label "killer instinct." There's other kinds of desire, too. I think I have the desire, for instance, to work hard enough at boxing, to study it and learn it thoroughly. I've got the desire to keep in good shape over a long period of time. I have enough desire to know how to apply my talents and to have the patience to know when is the best time in a fight to use them. I have enough desire to be an unbeaten world champion. If that's not enough desire, then I guess I don't know what desire is.

IS: Do you think perhaps that the public has an image of what a fighter is supposed to be like in and out of the ring—an image that you don't quite fit?

MS: I think that's probably true. Or maybe not the image of a boxer so much as the images of particular boxers, the "raging bull" type like a Jake LaMotta or Duran, or like Rocky in the movies, or a really colorful and controversial character like Ali. I don't match up with any of those types.

IS: Are you surprised when you meet people who don't know you and tell you that you don't look like a fighter?

MS: I always tell them, "Thank you."

IS: It almost sounds like you're ashamed of being a boxer.

MS: I'm ashamed of the image that a lot of people have of boxers. I really didn't know

what people thought about boxers until I had already been one for a while, and then I became interested and I started to read up on the history of boxing and talk to people and find out what they thought about boxers. I was really surprised and disgusted by what they thought. I mean, if you get to know boxers, if you spend time around them, you realize that most of them are very clever and very hungry young guys who see boxing as the quickest way out of the hole their lives are in. They're not dumb and they don't just think about fighting—the ones who just think about fighting are the ones who wind up in jail. The ones who become boxers are the ones who are willing to work and who see boxing as the best way to get something back for the work they put into it. Most of them aren't very well educated, but that's not the same thing as being stupid. A lot of boxers have good sense. *I've* got good sense.

IS: I notice that, like Gene Tunney, you prefer the word "boxer" to "fighter."

MS: Yes, of course, because that's what I consider myself. There's a lot about boxing I really don't enjoy. I don't enjoy being hit, and I don't especially like having to hurt someone else. I can *do* it; I can make myself enjoy just about anything if I have to, but I'm not a boxer because I enjoy hurting people.

IS: Why are you a boxer?

MS: Because at a time in my life when I needed to be very good at something, I found that I was very good at boxing.

IS: So now, more than a decade after you started boxing in gyms, how do you feel about it?

MS: I'm addicted to it by now. I'm a junkie. I like the training, I like to stay in shape. I'm really into the strategy of boxing; I like trying to put together a fight plan and then seeing if I can carry it out. I get satisfaction out of making the other guy miss a punch, or out of feeling his frustration when he can't get to me. And, yes, I admit that it's satisfying to make someone pay for trying to hit me.

IS: Given your punching ability and that of Dwight Braxton, I think many were disappointed in the way the fight went.

MS: Yeah. I think some people were disappointed that one of us wasn't killed.

IS: Well, it was the most publicized bout in the history of the light-heavyweights, and a lot of sports writers were expecting it to do for the 175-pound division what the Duran-Leonard fight did for the welterweights three years ago.

MS: I can't help that. If all people want is entertainment, they better go hire Michael Jackson. My job is to go out there and win the best way I know how. Besides, I really think we gave everyone a good fight. I mean, you had two of the best boxers in the world out there, and we were using all our weapons on offense and defense, and I think people who really know boxing could see that.

IS: There is always a lot of talk before a big fight, in which both parties are quoted in graphic detail about what they're going to do to each other in the ring, but somehow the pre-fight publicity for you and Braxton really seemed to go overboard. Was some of it a bit forced?

MS: On my part it definitely was. I only do

'I'm ashamed of the image a lot of people have of boxers.'

that stuff to help sell tickets. I think Dwight really got off on it, though.

IS: Do you two really dislike each other as much as it seems, or is all of that just hype?

MS: Most of it is just the usual fight build-up kind of stuff. I don't hate Dwight, and I don't believe he hates me. I think he resents me a little, but I'm sure he doesn't hate me.

IS: You had sparred with him before, right?

MS: Right. He had been one of my sparring partners, so I knew his tricks and style pretty well. The funny thing is that we had talked about fighting each other back in 1980, and how we could go about it so we could attract the most publicity and make the most money. And Dwight kept joking that the best way to do it was for one of us to hold the WBA title and one to hold the WBC title, so a fight between us would unify the light-heavyweight crown. And for that to happen, I'd have to beat Eddie Mustafa Muhammad—Eddie Gregory—and he'd have to beat Matthew Saad Muhammad—Matt Franklin—and as it turned out, that's exactly what happened. "You get one Muhammad," he told me, "and I'll get the other." And that's what we did.

IS: Judging from what you've said about boxing, it would be a safe bet that you were satisfied with the way the fight turned out.

MS: Definitely. I think from the point of view of planning out a fight and then acting it out, this was the most satisfying fight I've ever had.

IS: Did you know you had won the fight at the final bell? You didn't have to wait for the officials' scoring?

MS: Yes. I thought I won at least 10 rounds. When I saw a replay of the fight later, I made it 11 or 12.

IS: The Braxton fight is certainly the most important in your career up to now, and it came along at a time of great personal tragedy for you. How did you cope with all of that? Did it affect your attitude going into the fight, and did you consider postponing?

MS: No, you see, I needed the fight. I wanted it because it gave me a sense of purpose and something to concentrate on besides my sense of loss. Sometimes when things are the worst is when you need that kind of thing, you know, someone telling you 'OK, we have to do this for so many hours a day, and then we have to do this from four till six,' and it forces you to be around people so you don't brood and pull away into a shell or something. It gives you a way to work off aggression and hostility, and the training leaves you so physically tired you sleep no matter what's on your mind. The result is that I went into the Braxton fight totally out of my mind. I trained for that fight like I knew I was going to get beat bad, I mean physically. I kept telling myself, 'You're going to get bloodied, you're going to get beat up,' so that anything he did that was short of that wouldn't have been enough. I'm serious; he would have had to kill me to beat me that night, that's how determined I was. I was expecting the roughest fight of my life, and I was prepared for it mentally as well as physically.

IS: It must have occurred to you around, say, the fifth round that the fight wasn't going to be as tough as you anticipated.

MS: No, first round.

IS: First round?

MS: Yes. The first round, the bell rang and he didn't come charging out at me, and I knew I had him. I mean, I didn't decide to let up on anything, because I knew that anything can happen, especially with a guy like Braxton, but I knew right there in the first round that I was going to be in charge of things.

IS: I suppose it's no secret that the light-heavyweight division isn't exactly loaded with talent right now. Every fighter looks for that big money fight—where do you think your next one will come from?

MS: I haven't decided yet, but the rematches with Eddie Davis and Dwight Braxton are the best possibilities. If I get past them, well . . . I don't know yet.

IS: Are you tired of everyone asking you if you're going to move up to the heavyweight division?

MS: Yeah, *very* tired. I don't know, I guess it's something I'll think about very hard if I get through this year unbeaten. I feel I'm in my prime right now, I'm only 27 and I haven't taken a lot of punishment in my career, and I'd like to keep going for a few more years. But the prospects in the light-heavyweight division just don't seem too promising right now. It's not the kind of thing where you can look forward to two or three years of good opponents and feel you've got a future fighting there. So right now I'm thinking more and more about the heavyweights.

IS: Some cynics have suggested that you're taking time to make up your mind while waiting for Larry Holmes to retire.

MS: Well, if I wanted to fight a big money fight, it would probably be best with a proven champion like Holmes. That would be an interesting match because it would feature two unbeaten champions fighting for the heavyweight crown. But the thing is, I don't just want to go on an eating binge and put on maybe 15 or 20 pounds or so, because all that would do is slow me down. I don't want to lose my quickness or my punch. So what you have to do is start to put the weight on gradually, so your body can accommodate it, and realistically that takes at least a year.

IS: Does it bother you that no light-heavyweight champion has ever won the heavyweight title?

MS: Let's say it doesn't encourage me too much.

IS: Why do you think that is?

MS: I think it's mostly the size and weight. It's not unusual for heavyweights to go 220, and a guy that normally carries 175, that's a 45-pound gap. No other division in boxing has anywhere near a gap like that. If Marvin Hagler wanted to fight me, for instance, all he would have to do is put on another six or seven pounds, which I'm sure he could do quite easily. I wish he would, incidentally. He kept needling Leonard about putting on some weight to come on up and fight him, and he fought Duran, who isn't a real middleweight at all, so why doesn't *he* do a little movin' up and pick on somebody closer to his own size? We'd probably both make more money than anybody fighting in our own divisions.

IS: Why do you think it would be different for you if you tried to move up to the heavyweights?

MS: Well, I have more height and reach than most light-heavies, and I think I have a real heavyweight's punch. Also, I'm more practical than others who have tried.

IS: How so?

MS: For one thing, if it had been me who had Joe Louis in trouble after 12 rounds, I sure wouldn't have blown it by getting reckless. I'd have been heavyweight champ.

IS: If we can shift the topic for a moment, this is an Olympic year, and it's easy to notice that whenever you give interviews nowadays, you display your Olympic gold medal. Does that bring back memories of a happier time for you?

MS: Yeah, it really does. That was a time in my life when I loved boxing for the pure sport of it. Winning the gold medal was a wonderful high for me. It took me a whole year to come down. I don't think it would mean as much to me to win the heavyweight title as it did to have my arm raised that night in Montreal.

IS: What do you think of when you hear all the arguments about opening up the Olympics to professionals?

MS: Well, it might make sense for sports like hockey. I don't really know about that kind of thing. But I think it would be a big mistake in something like boxing. There's just no replacement for the kind of thrill a crowd can get rooting for a 19-year-old who has never had the experience of a professional fight. If they opened it up to professionals, how could amateurs compete? What teenager in the world who had never had to box more than three rounds in a fight is going to be a match for Larry Holmes or Marvin Hagler or Michael Spinks? I think it would be a big mistake for boxing to open the competition to professionals.

IS: When you were an amateur collecting all those titles, were you already looking ahead to the gold medal as a way to launch a pro career?

MS: No. In fact, I wasn't even thinking then about a gold medal in the Olympics. All I was thinking about was that I had a chance to be the absolute best at something, the best in the world in my weight class. That thought was so astonishing to me, it was almost like my head would bust open from thinking about it, like I couldn't contain it.

IS: Did involving yourself with boxing so much at such a young age involve a sacrifice on your part?

MS: Yes, it did. Boxing was a wonderful hobby for me, but it was one of three things at the time that I didn't want to give up. I had a job, I was working, and my schooling was important to me, and I was having a good time boxing, because boxing was getting me out to see the world. I got to travel and learn a lot about things that I couldn't learn about in my classroom. And, finally, I realized that if I handled it right, if I was smart and kept my head and worked hard at it, boxing could replace the other two, it could be my job and it could also be my schooling, allow me to see and experience things I wouldn't find in a classroom.

IS: So now you've been a National Golden Gloves champion, an Olympic gold medal winner, and a professional light-heavyweight champion. It's been more than eight years since you lost a fight. And yet, when boxing people argue about who the best fighter in the world is, pound for pound, you still don't hear them mention Michael Spinks along with Aaron Pryor, Roberto Duran, Ray Leonard, and Marvin Hagler. Does that bother you? Do you think that maybe you haven't been accorded your just due?

MS: Not really. I can't waste my time asking you or anybody to give me my just due. I don't mean this to sound hostile, but the truth is that I'm not looking for the press to give me nothing. If recognition of me as a fighter comes before I'm dead, that's fine. But I'm not going to campaign for it.

IS: You don't really court the press, do you?

MS: No. I don't like the way the media gets tied up in the lives of public figures. I'm totally against that. I didn't do what I've done so far in my life with the intention of being famous, and it doesn't really bug me that much if somebody else is more famous than me. There're so many things, unfortunate things, that happened to me in my career, and to Leon in his career, and the media tended to bend a lot of it out of shape, and it hurt my family back in St. Louis. I don't want that to happen anymore.

IS: And yet you don't seem to shun the press in any way.

MS: I do what I have to do; I know that a certain amount of attention to publicity is expected of me, but my life is my own.

IS: You're almost as good at slipping questions as you are at slipping punches. I've noticed that when you get a question that you think hits too close to the personal side of your life, you politely deflect it.

MS: Right. I don't want to let everybody into my life. I know writers have a job to do, but I don't know everything about them, and I don't see why they should know everything about me.

IS: Don't you think that tends to give a kind of fuzzy outline to your public image?

MS: If it does, that doesn't bother me. But I don't see why that should be true. I had someone interview me once, and he said, "I still don't really feel like I know you," and I said "I don't see why. Just read back everything I've been saying. That's all me." ■

Contributing writer ALLEN BARRA, *a former light-heavyweight in his own right, says he'll conduct his next interview with Spinks while sparring with him. Allen's last piece for* INSIDE SPORTS *discussed the highs and lows of the World Boxing Council.*

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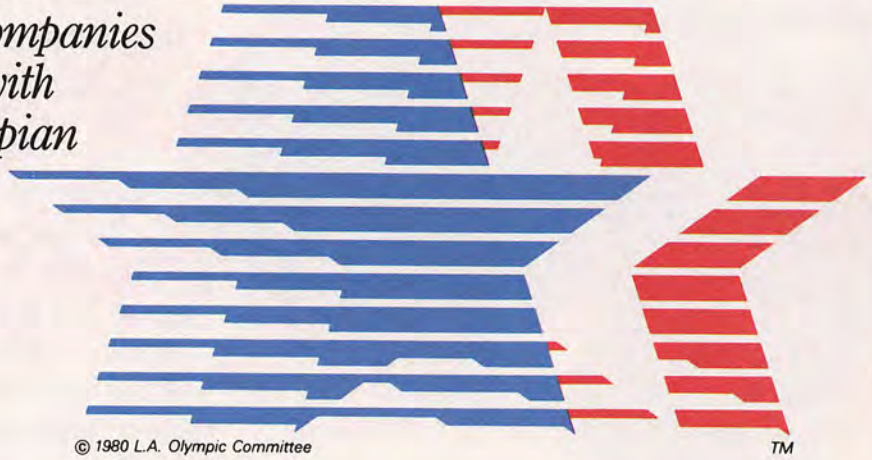
The competition among companies wanting to be associated with the Games has been Olympian



By MARK WHEELER

LET'S SEE NOW, YOU VOTE, YOU still remember most of the "Pledge of Allegiance," and you've learned to balance two beers and a hot dog while standing for the "Star Spangled Banner." Therefore, you call yourself an American. But today, the real sign of a true American, a patriot, is the one who uses the following items in the course of the day:

Morning—Gets dressed in Levi jeans, drives to work in a Buick, buys gas at an Arco station and the morning paper at the local 7-Eleven.

Afternoon—Lunch at McDonald's: a Big Mac washed down with a Coke. Maybe a little shopping, because you didn't leave home without your American Express Card.

Evening—Wearing Converse shoes while you exercise, drinking a Bud when you're finished, and relaxing by playing a few video games on your Atari computer.

Now that's American. The 10 firms mentioned above, along with 20 others, have paid dollars of Olympian proportions to become "Official Sponsors"—and therefore financiers—of the '84 Summer Games in Los Angeles. And while they don't really mean to apply patriotic pressure, they are banking, almost literally, on the premise that you'll appreciate their efforts on behalf of the Olympics enough to go out and purchase their products.

For a company, being an Official Olympic Sponsor is the most prestigious association there is, because it's also the most exclusive. But other companies, shut out from the limited number of sponsorships available, hope the "Official Sponsor" distinction will be lost in the mind of the consumer, whose interest, after all, is in the Games themselves. So they get involved in other ways—Ford hopes you'll drive their cars after you learn they are the official car of the U.S. National Volleyball Association; Johnson and Johnson wants you to shave with Edge shaving gel, because they are contributors to the U.S. Olympic Committee; and Miller hopes you'll crack one of their Lite beers, because they're funding two U.S. Olympic training centers—all efforts that provide support, either directly or indirectly, to the U.S. Olympic effort.

While there will be heated competition on the field among Olympic athletes, the off-the-field competition behind closed corporate doors has burned with the same intense light among companies that wish to have some type of affiliation with the prestige of the Olympic Games.

The reason is simple. "The Olympics are one of the few sporting events known worldwide that almost everybody feels good about, so it's good for a company to be identified with them," says Nancy Peterson of Levi-Strauss, the official outfitters for the U.S. Winter and Summer teams. "Also, there are short-term benefits, such as retail promotions and certain advertising tie-ins that can be developed."

Another reason, which cynics will take with a large dose of skepticism, is that many companies simply believe in the spirit of the Games, and for what the Games stand.

But it is the volume of commercial tie-ins that many people tend to criticize, and in past Olympic Games that criticism might have been justified. The 1976 Games in Montreal had 150 Official Sponsors, while the 1980 Lake Placid Winter Olympics had a whopping 350, causing the Games to take on what was described as a "carnival atmosphere."

In an effort to contain this kind of crass commercialization, and to return what Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee spokesman George Broder calls "some sense of taste" to the Games, the LAOOC decided to limit the number of 1984 official corporate sponsors to 30.

"We don't want to overcommercialize by having an official doughnut, an official hair spray, and an official chewing gum," Peter Ueberroth, president of the LAOOC and

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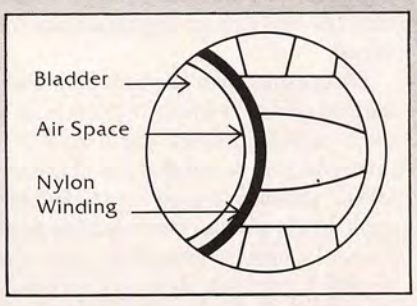

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slated to be the next commissioner of baseball, has said. "We're just having a few companies that show they have a dedication to youth and to sports."

The limitation was one-half of a two-part plan designed by Ueberroth to avoid the almost unbelievable expenses associated with past Games, including an estimated $9 billion spent by the Soviet Union for the '80 Games, and the huge $1 billion deficit faced by the city of Montreal after the '76 Olympics. (The other half of the plan was to save money by using existing L.A. sports facilities, such as the Forum or UCLA's Pauley Pavilion, rather than building expensive new venues, which is the reason so many events are scattered throughout the metropolitan L.A. area. Two exceptions are a new swimming stadium on the USC campus, paid for by McDonald's, and a new bicycle velodrome, paid for by the Southland [7-Eleven stores] Corporation.)

Los Angeles voters overwhelmingly rejected a measure that would have allowed public money to finance the Games. That made official the LAOOC's original intention not to use public money. Because the committee was solely dependent on private financing, it needed a "hook" to attract corporations. By limiting Official Sponsors to 30, Ueberroth was able to offer interested companies a certain selectivity, along with sole use of the official symbols of the '84 Summer Games—"Sam the Eagle" and the red, white, and blue "three stars in motion" symbol.

But in return, the corporations had to pay a steep price that varied between $4 and $13 million for a sponsorship, either in cash or goods and services. The LAOOC collected $125 million from Official Sponsors alone. If the commitment was cash, the money had to be paid up front (everybody, even ticket buyers, had to pay up front, and the LAOOC has collected close to $50 million in interest from this). Coca-Cola's contribution was primarily cash, IBM's was personal computers for the LAOOC office staff, while for Xerox, it was copy machines. But being an Official Sponsor can entail working for the Olympics throughout the Games, and in the years leading up to the Games. Levi-Strauss, as one example, will be outfitting the entire staff of the LAOOC, as well as the team members (a total of some 60,000 persons in all).

"We sat down with the LAOOC to decide on styles, and sent out a questionnaire to any athlete who had a chance to make the team, asking for his or her sizes," says Nancy Peterson.

The results were tabulated by computer, and a sizing curve was established. But still, Levi has to take into account individual differences in build, which can vary radically. And, of course, each alteration costs more money. "There are striking differences from sport to sport," says Peterson. "Female gymnasts are well-built, muscular, but are often very tiny; fencers will have one thigh muscle more developed than another, because they thrust with one leg."

The Olympics are one of the few sporting events known worldwide that everybody feels good about.

The LAOOC has two other levels in which corporations can become involved. The "Official Suppliers" of the Summer Games are those companies providing athletic equipment for use this summer, such as Judogi judo mats, Mikasa volleyballs and water polo balls, and York barbells. Then there are various small businesses that are supplying the numerous souvenirs—key chains, hats, T-shirts—that will be, or already are, on sale.

But for the large corporations, there are other ways of associating with the Olympics besides being an Official Sponsor. ABC Television, which paid $225 million to televise the Summer Games, was also given the right to develop its own Olympic logo. Companies that buy ad time from ABC can use this logo in their ads. That's the route Nissan Motors has taken, which purchased between $17 and $20 million worth of ABC air time, and is already using the logo in its ads. Buick is an Official Olympic Sponsor. The Miller Brewing Company is funding two U.S. Olympic training centers, and has been aggressively pointing out its involvement. Anheuser-Busch, an Official Sponsor, appears unconcerned.

"We aren't threatened by what Miller is doing," says an Anheuser-Busch spokesman. "It is our feeling that it is a very positive thing to be associated with the Olympics, and the public will know who is making the Games possible."

After the LAOOC decided to limit Official Sponsors to 30, it was a matter of deciding what kinds of sponsors to have. "We contacted some companies, some companies came to us," says the LAOOC's Broder. "It was a combination of both. We did want to try to stick with mostly American sponsors."

That's one reason the LAOOC approached Eastman Kodak to be the official film for the Summer Games, and is an example of how competitive companies can be. When Kodak kept dragging its feet over the $14 million sponsorship price tag, Fuji Films stepped in and became the Official Sponsor. Kodak fought back by becoming a sponsor of the U.S. Track and Field team and the U.S. Olympic Committee, and, like Nissan, has been making that fact known. (The USOC allows its sponsors to use the USOC shield in its ads.)

Complicating the situation was the signing of 21 firms who became Official Sponsors of the 1984 Winter Games, including Campbell Soups, Kellogg cereals, and M&M Mars, the official snack food supplier.

The most visible, and expensive, way for a corporation to show its association with the Olympics is with television advertising. Many companies combined their name with the Olympic ideals of patriotism and brotherhood. Among the best:

- Budweiser Light's touching ad about an airline ground crew that takes extra care loading the U.S. Olympic team's luggage, then holds a hand-written sign saying "Good luck" that is acknowledged by team members with a wave.
- Coca-Cola's commercial that pays homage to the different nationalities competing in the games, which begins by showing just the faces of various Black, Mexican, Irish, etc., athletes, then pulls back to show they are all members of the American team.
- Another Coke ad that begins by showing a young girl struggling to earn a spot on the U.S. ski team, and ending by showing her being at first passed by, then handed a USA ski suit. A potent story packed into just a few seconds.

Given the cynicism regarding amateur athletics, it's not surprising when the motives of Olympic Sponsors are questioned.

But consider this: The LAOOC is estimating they may show a post-Olympic profit of as much as $15.5 million, and if they do, the proceeds will be divided up between the USOC, national, and southern California amateur sports groups. That would mean direct financial support to young kids, giving them a chance to reach and develop their potential. And it's hard to be cynical about that. ■

MARK WHEELER, *a Los Angeles-based free-lance writer, has been chosen* INSIDE SPORTS' *Official Writer of the 1984 Summer Olympics. His last I.S. piece profiled the Dodgers' Fernando Valenzuela.*

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The Agony Of Victory

Even serious injuries couldn't keep swimmer Steve Lundquist from his Olympic destiny

By CARLTON STOWERS

SWIMMERS—NOT EVEN THE greats, the world record-setters—do not generally bear the same broken bones and torn cartilage reminders of their salad days as do middle linebackers and hockey goalies. It is not a part of the athletic bargain a youngster makes when he decides to bypass the Golden Gloves and Pee Wee Football to focus his attention on backstroking, freestyling, or breast-stroking.

But for Steve Lundquist, a 22-year-old Georgian who is generally regarded as the finest breast-stroke swimmer in the world today, a young man with the kind of looks and charm that melt the hearts of coeds and bring big-buck smiles from those who operate modeling agencies, the pain is there, nonetheless.

It has been an unwelcome companion since those days back in Jonesboro, Ga., when he was setting records faster than you could count his turns. It has been with him through world records, national collegiate championships, World Games triumphs, and Pan-American Games victories, and will remain right through next summer when, with any luck, he hopes to end his celebrated career with a harvest of Olympic gold.

Never mind that his is a medical horror story.

There is a left knee that hasn't been right since he underwent surgery at age 13, after what he still recalls as a rather glorious go-kart accident. He uses none of the medical book mumbo-jumbo to describe the problem: "The doctor took something out that supports almost 100% of the weight you put on the leg," he says. "What I've got left is something that holds up about 10%."

One wonders, then, how he manages to keep his 6'2", 185-pound frame upright walking to the parking lot, much less propelling it through water at record speeds. "You just learn to adjust," he says.

Then there is the shoulder he dislocated badly in an heroic attempt to avoid damage to a friend's motorcycle during his "Crash" Lundquist sophomore year at Southern Methodist University. "The battery was dead," he says, after downing his third tumbler of milk following a demanding workout, "and I was trying to push-start it. It was one of those big ol' GS-1000s. Suddenly it kicked off and got away from me. I was afraid it was going to really get trashed out—hit a tree or something—so I chased it and sort of bulldogged it down. It came down on me in a row of hedges. There was $50 worth of damage to the cycle and a busted shoulder for me."

Five doctors examined the damage and collectively advised surgery. Steve said thanks but no thanks, and chose to try to rehabilitate it. There were times, even during meets, when the shoulder would go out two, sometimes three times. A trainer would help him pop it back in place and off he'd go to the next event.

Even today it bothers him, lifting weights, when he's swimming, and sometimes just when he's lying in bed and happens to turn the wrong way.

"I've never known an athlete with such a high pain threshold," says SMU swim coach George McMillion. "That shoulder must have popped out two dozen times that season. I saw him crying more times than I like to remember. But he was determined not to have surgery and to continue to compete.

"You know, I honestly think he eventually healed it through nothing more than positive thinking. He just convinced himself that it was going to be OK, and eventually it was. Well, at least it got to where it wasn't popping out of place every time he turned around."

Which brings us to the latest—and most frightening—medical crisis in the Lundquist saga.

Having returned to Dallas after a superlative performance in last year's Pan-Am Games in Caracas, Venezuela, he was ready for some fun and relaxation. He and friends went to a nearby lake for an afternoon of water skiing. It was, he remembers, one of those sun-splashed Texas days when all seems right with the world. Lundquist's world, at the moment, was perfect.

The accomplishments of the long summer of competition had resolved a major question he had wrestled with for some time. With his eligibility at SMU ending and the workaday world of two-dollar woes and a career beckoning, he wasn't at all certain he wanted to endure the 16,000-yards-a-day practice schedule and the lonely hours in the weight room necessary for another shot at the Olympic Games. He'd done it all once and made a team that the president of the United States forbade to go to the Soviet Union. Maybe it was time to step down and let someone else try for the spot he had once coveted.

Pressed by members of the media, he admitted he wasn't at all sure. There was, he said, 80% of him that wanted to stay with it, to make an effort at making the U.S. team. The other 20% was eager to put his business degree to action. To close friends, he confided that his performance in the 1983 season would be the determining factor.

On the afternoon that he skied behind a boat going about 55 miles per hour, he could reflect on the following:

At the NCAA meet he had won the 100-meter breast stroke and the 200-meter individual medley, his sixth and seventh national collegiate titles during his four-year career; at the National Long Course championships, he broke his own world record in the 100-meter breast stroke, set an American mark in the 200-meter breast, won the 200-meter individual medley, and was the meet's high point scorer; then at the Pan-Am Games he had won both breast-stroke events and swam a leg on the world record-setting 400-meter medley relay.

He made the decision; he would let the business world wait while he tried once more to reach for the Olympic glory that had first beckoned while he swam in Lake Spivey back in Jonesboro.

"I had a good summer," he says. "That was

Lundquist: 'I've got a lot of giving back to do to the sport.'

the deciding factor. I set some goals for myself and I achieved them. That told me all I needed to know."

Then, in the midst of all the renewed enthusiasm and determination, he went water-skiing with his friends.

"It was getting late and I was going to make my last ski run of the day," he remembers. "I was wearing small skis and planned to kick them off and ski barefoot. I'd done it a lot of times. But for a split second I lost my concentration—and my balance. I hit the water at 55 miles an hour, shoulder first. I felt like I'd been thrown into a brick wall."

The shoulder, the only good one he had left, was badly dislocated. By the time he arrived at a nearby emergency room, the arm was numb. He had no sensation in his hand. His grip was not strong enough to break an egg.

There was, in the wake of this mishap, no pain—and he wished for it, certain that if he felt it he could be reassured that things would mend as they had always done. How sweet the ache and throbbing would have felt. But it was not there, and for the first time in his life, Steve Lundquist felt his confidence slipping into fear.

HE HAD BEGUN SWIMMING AT age eight, urged on by a mother who was a former Red Cross lifeguard and YMCA swim instructor, and a father who had been a pretty fair freestyler in his high school days. They encouraged but never pushed. Steve and his older brother, Brad, now 25, were allowed to warm to competitive swimming on their own.

"When I started," Steve says, "the only goal I had was to beat my older brother."

He did so in short order, approaching the task with the same tunnel-vision dedication he demonstrates today. "Once he got started," says his father, Bob, "you had to almost drag him out of the water. He worked hard at it even as a little kid. Brad swam for the fun of it, took a more casual approach to it. For Steve, it was fun, but also quite serious."

By the time Steve Lundquist was 15, he had established state age-group records at virtually every distance and stroke, and was selected to his first U.S. national team. To help him reach such a lofty level at such an early age, Art Winters, a highly regarded coach at the nearby Forest Park (Ga.) Swim Club, daily traveled the 12 miles to Lake Spivey to oversee Steve's workouts.

On a pontoon boat borrowed from the Lundquists, Winters would ride alongside the youngster as he worked on various strokes, offering assistance and encouragement.

"One evening after a workout," the elder Lundquist recalls, "Art came to the house and sat talking about Steve's future. He told us he felt Steve could develop into one of the greatest swimmers in the country. But, he said, Steve needed a workout pool if he was to realize his potential."

No sooner said than done. On a piece of land provided by a friend named Al Tallman, a 25-yard pool was constructed. Bob Lundquist did most of the work himself, pouring concrete, installing pumps, building a dressing room. The price tag, he says was somewhere in the $30,000 range. And, he is quick to point out, it was worth every penny. "That first summer we had Steve and three other kids on what we called the Tallman Swim Team," he says. "We went down to a Junior Olympics meet in Memphis and won 19 medals and broke a bunch of meet records. In fact, Steve still holds something like 37 age-group records here in Georgia."

Soon, though, age-group records would be replaced by greater achievements.

Steve was 17 when he set his first world record. At the 1978 National AAU Long Course championships, he erased almost a second from the 200-yard individual medley record held by the Soviet Union's Aleksandr Sidorenko. A year later he became the first swimmer ever to dip below two minutes in the 200-yard breast stroke.

He made little attempt to hide his athletic confidence and flaunted his accomplishments the way only a teenager can. In his senior year in high school, in fact, he was so certain of his swimming superiority that he left the pool to join the football team. In a state that ranks football somewhere up there with Sunday-go-to-meetin' and prize peaches, Lundquist felt stardom as a tight end would add considerably to his celebrity status. After riding the bench on game day for several weeks in a row, however, he explained to the coach in no uncertain terms that he was making a big mistake. Then he turned in his uniform and went back to swimming.

And when coaches from every major-college swim power in the country came calling, scholarship offers in hand, Steve played games. He told everyone he was interested, but would make no commitment. He was toying with the grown men who were begging for his services. Let them sweat it; they need me more than I need them.

If you had looked up the word "cocky" in the dictionary back then, you might well have been instructed to "see Steve Lundquist."

"I was good and I knew it," he says. "The problem was I went out of my way to let everyone know that I knew it. There were a lot of people in swimming who were just standing around waiting for me to fall on my face."

The day came at the 1979 Long Course National Championships in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. After winning three gold medals at the Pan-American Games in San Juan, Puerto Rico, just weeks before, Steve failed to even make the finals in the 100-meter breast stroke.

A number of fans—and fellow swimmers—cheered when the public address announcer made known Lundquist's failure.

In the stands, only Bob and Lois Lundquist knew there was some reason for their son's subpar showing. On the drive to Florida the previous afternoon, they had witnessed an automobile accident that claimed the life of one woman and seriously injured several

others. For four tension-filled hours Steve and his father had helped tend the injured. The experience had left the entire family drained and badly shaken.

Even some of the spurned coaches, who had long kept one last scholarship available in the event Steve might decide to attend their school, quietly savored his poor showing at Ft. Lauderdale.

George McMillion, the guiding force of the swim program at SMU, was not one of them. While at the Pan-Am Games, Lundquist had announced his decision to attend the Dallas university. It was there his career would continue to blossom. And it was there, on the quiet campus just north of downtown, that Steve Lundquist began taking stock of things other than swimming.

J. D. Browder, Lundquist's college roommate, caused him to pause and take a look at the world beyond Steve Lundquist and his magnificent athletic ability. Without even knowing it, J. D., a dwarf, taught Steve lessons that changed his life.

"He taught me just how lucky I am," Steve says. "Here is a guy who has to drag a chair over to the wall to switch on the lights, who has to stand on a box in front of the mirror to comb his hair, who has to have someone help him with a tray in the cafeteria because he can't reach up to where they're stacked, yet he has the most wonderful, positive outlook on life I've ever seen. I've never been around anyone who was such an inspiration to me.

"I've never seen him discouraged. I don't think there is a minute in the day that he thinks of his handicap. Being around him, seeing his attitude toward life and other people, really opened my eyes."

As he continued adding records and victories to his ever-growing list of accomplishments, Steve Lundquist began to reach out to people more, to share.

"I got a little philosophical, I guess," he says. "I found myself thinking back on things I'd seen in the past, things which should have made me realize how fortunate I was at the time. Back when I was a kid, I'd sometimes go with my dad [who is the president of an Atlanta-based firm which manufactures hospital beds] to visit hospitals and I'd see the people in the intensive care units, fighting for their lives. And I thought back on that accident we saw. If you stop and think about things like that, they can make you realize how quickly everything can end.

"I suppose if I had to give one reason why I'm still swimming, trying to make the Olympic team, it would be because I finally woke up one day and realized just how lucky I am."

By the time Lundquist swam his last competitive race for SMU, there was a new item to add to his biographical sheet. Along with the Southwest Conference and NCAA championships, the world and American records, the citations as the 1982 swimmer of the year, Steve Lundquist has become one of the best-liked athletes in the sport.

Where once there had been cheers for his failures, there now is a collective celebration over the news that he has decided to continue training for the '84 Summer Games.

One of the most pleased is his old coach back in Georgia, Art Winters. "If Steve had stopped training, not decided to go ahead and work toward his full potential, it would have been like Picasso giving up in mid-career. Steve can still accomplish things that will cause people to think he came from outer space."

THE SCENE WAS THE PERKINS Natatorium, for four years the home base of Steve Lundquist's athletic life. Sitting in the stands watching his former teammates compete in a collegiate meet, he shouted encouragement, visited with friends, and later went to the awards stand to help pass out medals. And to virtually everyone who stopped to say hello, he answered the same question: Yes, the shoulder was mending nicely, the feeling had returned in his arm and hand, and he was training six days a week.

And while the experts talk of him as the gold medal favorite in the 100- and 200-meter breast-stroke events in Los Angeles this summer, Steve talks of returning to a respectable level before any competition.

"It's one of those things you just have to have a feel for. I'll know when the time is right. But it would do me no good at all to jump into some meets too quickly and lose. I don't want to know I can be beaten, and I don't want anyone else to know they can beat me. That's an advantage I can't see giving anyone, if I can help it. But I'll be back soon; I'm getting close to being ready."

"I don't think you're going to find many people concerned that Steve won't come back and take up right where he left off," says University of Alabama coach Don Gambril, the 1984 U.S. Olympic swimming coach. "An athlete like Steve comes along once in a long, long while. He'll be ready this summer."

Steve, meanwhile, keeps his Olympic aspirations private. He talks of "hoping to make the team," and "winning a medal." If it happens to be gold, he says, that's icing on the cake. It is a modest stance they didn't get to know back there in Jonesboro.

"The Olympics are the kind of event you really enjoy being a part of," he says. "I've been to world championships and the Pan-Am Games, and I've seen the camaraderie of the athletes. Everyone has a common bond. You get in an atmosphere like that and all the political and religious differences get swept away.

"I hear guys talking about the financial rewards a good showing in the Olympic Games can mean to you, but I honestly haven't thought about that. I'm training for the Olympics for what they are, nothing else. I've had a lot of wonderful experiences in swimming, but never an Olympic Games. I'd like to be able to look back on that someday, to make everything complete."

In truth, the financial rewards have already begun to come his way. It will not be necessary to send your nickels and dimes to help Lundquist train for the Games. Though he has been in the management-trainee program of a plastic-pipe firm in Dallas, a new career has beckoned. Ad agencies, taken by his blond hair, blue eyes, and athletic physique, have introduced him to the world of modeling. There have been layouts in fashion magazines in Italy and England, and he recently spent a week in Hawaii posing for ads for Calvin Klein.

But now even that has come to a stop. To completely focus his attention on his training, Lundquist recently moved to Austin, where he will train twice daily with fellow Olympic hopefuls Rowdy Gaines and Rick Carey. Though there have been hints that the change of address was the result of a flap between Lundquist and SMU coach McMillion, he insists the move was made simply because of the high-tech facility on the University of Texas campus.

"It's no secret that the pool at SMU isn't one of the greatest in the world," he says. "And if I'm going to go at this Olympic business full bore, I might as well do it where the conditions are as ideal as possible."

When, however, the Summer Games are done, Steve will be back in Dallas, helping in a multimillion dollar fund-raising program that will someday see a new swimming facility built on his alma mater's campus.

"I've got a lot of giving back to do to the sport," he says. "Maybe that's one of the ways I can begin my repayment."

And there's one other thing he's considering. "When I'm through swimming competitively," he says, "I want to be able to enjoy a normal life, to water ski, play tennis. And I'd like to do it without aches and pains. So, what I may do is just check into a hospital and get everything fixed at once—the knee and the shoulders. I might just do it and lie around in a hospital and rest up for a while."

After 14 years, he deserves it. ■

CARLTON STOWERS, *who says he swims like a rock, is a Dallas-based associate producer of the cable TV Olympic series "Countdown to '84."*

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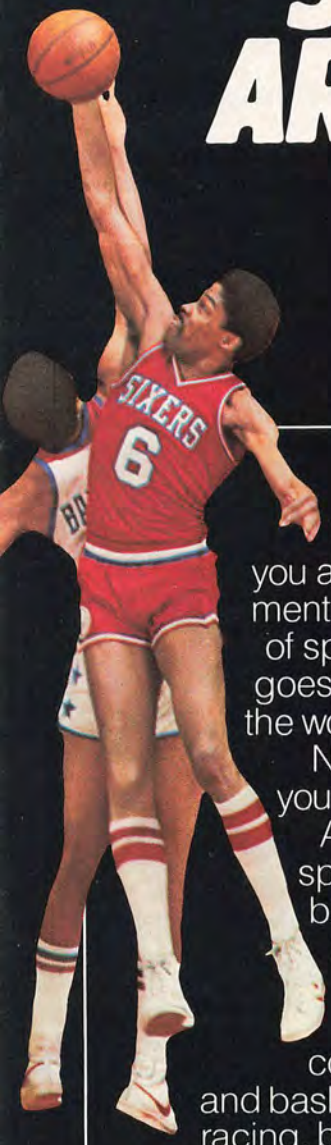

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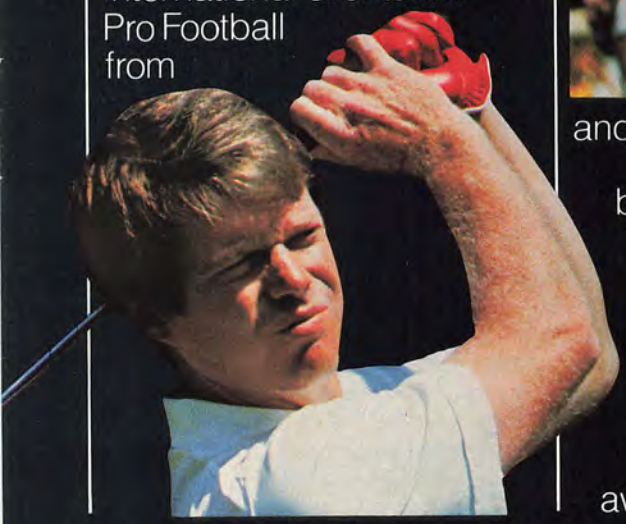

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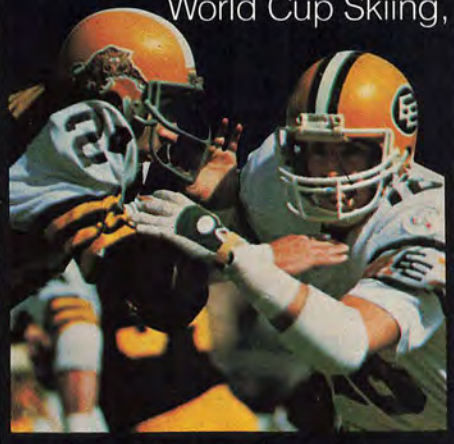

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Don Schollander

MOST PEOPLE WOULD EXPECT that becoming the first person to win four swimming gold medals in one Olympics would have opened a lot of doors for Don Schollander in the business world. It didn't work out that way, at least not for a while.

Schollander, now president of his own real estate company in Portland, Ore.—North Shore Development—wasn't able to turn the four golds he won at Tokyo in 1964 into immediate profits, though his company now does about $5 million annually in sales.

"Winning at Tokyo actually made it difficult for me at first, because I didn't have any credibility in the business world," said Schollander. "People assume athletes are dumb jocks. It was easy for bankers and other businessmen to say I shouldn't be able to negotiate a $4.5 million loan."

Schollander was only 18 at Tokyo when he won the 100-meter freestyle in Olympic record time, then set a world record while winning the 400-meter freestyle and logged yet two more world records as the anchor man on the 4×100-meter freestyle and 4×200-meter freestyle relay teams.

Today, the top women are swimming faster than Schollander did, but he isn't bothered.

"Kids today are simply bigger and taller," said the 5′ 11″ Schollander. "The girls are as tall as I am, and the men are much bigger."

Another factor, he said, "is the swimsuits are a lot better and so are the pools. They have found ways to control the surface action of waves and the underwater turbulence with wider, deeper pools. We swam in pools that literally were so narrow or shallow they were like bathtubs."

"In the 100-meter freestyle," Schollander said, "today's pools are probably a second faster, and in the 200-free they may be worth three seconds."

At Tokyo, he was selected to carry the U.S. flag in closing ceremonies. Then, four years later at Mexico City, where he was considered "the old man" of swimming at 22, he managed a silver medal in the 200-meter freestyle and a gold as the anchor on the 4×200 freestyle relay.

"I knew that would be the end of my career," said Schollander, who then told reporters: "I'm finished with water. In fact, I may not take a bath or a shower for another two years."

—TOM WEIR

'Today's pools are faster.'

Bob Hayes

THE TITLE HE NOW SPORTS IS vice president in charge of marketing for Dallas Oil Waste and Chemical Company, a firm that deals in the recycling of oil and gas. It is but one of the many titles Bob Hayes has worn in the last 20 years.

They called him "Bullet Bob" when he was a four-time All-Pro wide receiver for the Dallas Cowboys from 1964 to 1975, setting an arm's-length list of club records and single-handedly causing the restructuring of NFL defensive philosophies.

And, on the darker side, he was Bob Hayes, inmate of the Texas Department of Corrections, sentenced to five years in prison for trafficking in drugs in 1979.

For Hayes, however, his favorite title is one he earned in Tokyo in 1964 on a chewed-up cinder track at the Olympic Games. There, by winning the 100-meter dash by the widest margin in the history of the modern Games, then anchoring the United States to a remarkable come-from-behind victory in the 4×100-meter relay, he earned the title of World's Fastest Human.

"That," he says from behind the desk in his modern north Dallas office, "was far and away the most rewarding experience I ever had in athletics. For quite some time I had people—friends, teammates, coaches, and members of the press—telling me I was the fastest sprinter in the world. But until you have that Olympic gold medal, it isn't a certainty. When I stepped up on that winner's stand and heard them play the national anthem, I could finally say, 'OK, I'm the best.'"

The drug charges, however, continue to haunt him, providing a legacy he fears will outlive his Olympic and NFL glories. The image, he knows, has been tarnished. While quick to admit that he was, in fact, guilty, that he did arrange the sale of a small amount of cocaine to an undercover narcotics agent, he remains bitter about the manner in which the arrest was made. He was, the story goes, set up by a man who had been a friend for some time. Even today Bob insists his involvement was only to do a favor for a friend.

"It's hard not to be bitter," he says, "but I paid my debt, I got it all behind me. I've tried to put it out of my mind and I wish others would, too."

He could have in mind those who are involved in fund-raising and promotion of the upcoming Summer Games in Los Angeles. The duties of his job leave him ample time to work with the Dallas chapter of The Olympians, a group of former U.S. athletes who participated in Games past. He's appeared at various fund-raising activities throughout the country, but would like to do more. Regularly, he is made aware of activities going on without his involvement.

"I think the drug thing causes some people to shy away, to not ask me to help," he says. "And I hate that, because I would love to help the Olympic movement in any way I can. The excitement over the Games being here in the United States this year is really catching. For me, it brings back a lot of wonderful memories.

"I've always felt the people of this country were very forgiving. And I'd like to think what I've done wrong will be measured against what I've done right. I won gold medals for the U.S., I set world records, I entertained a lot of people, and I spoke to more youth groups than I can even remember. I feel like I've done a lot to support my country. And I'd like to do more."

—CARLTON STOWERS

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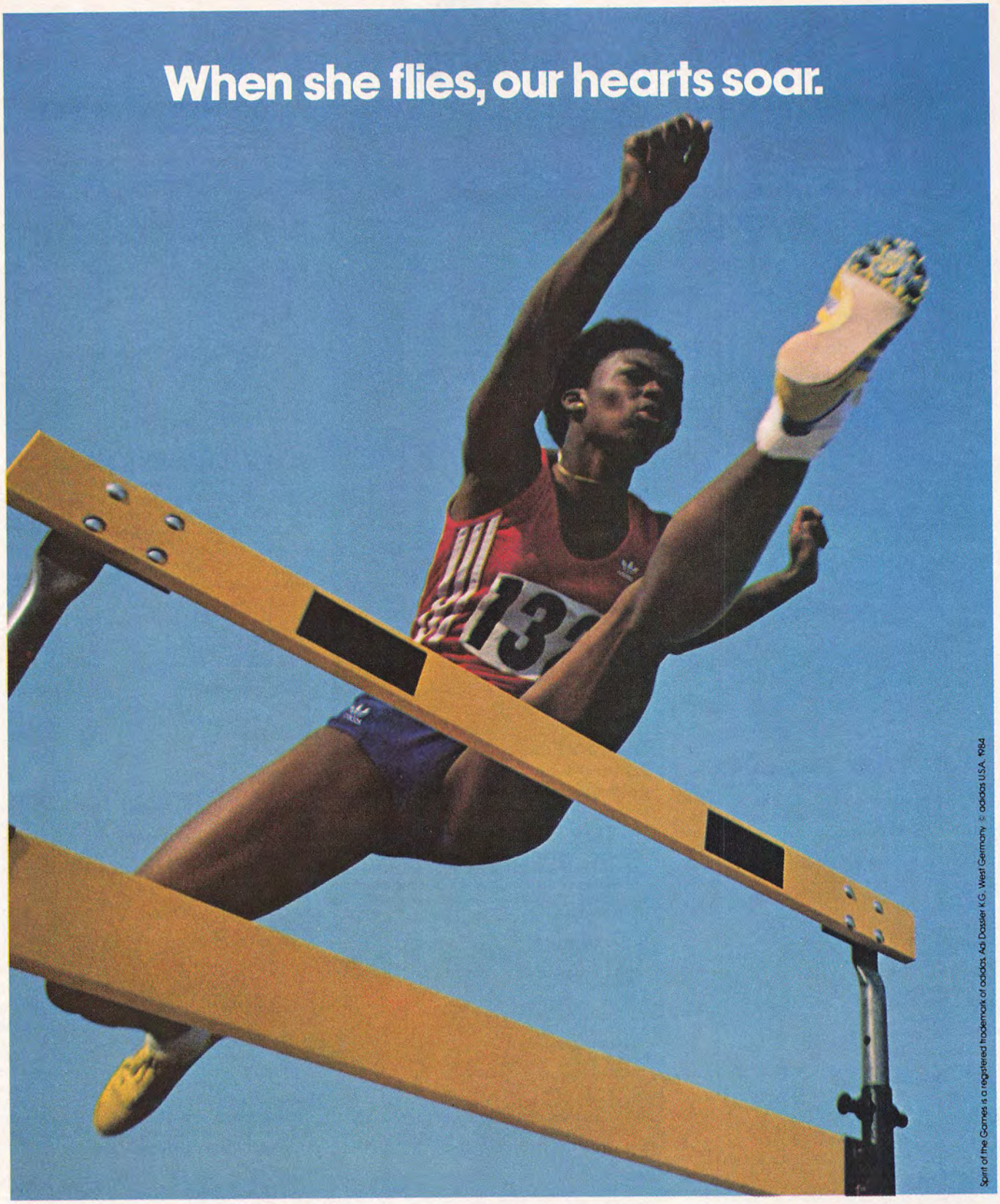

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NUMBERS

WINNING STREAKS

From 1908 to 1968, the United States won the gold medal in the pole vault—the longest streak of gold medal performances for any country in Summer Olympic history. Listed below are the longest gold medal winning streaks in the Summer Games.

Event	Country	Streak	Years
Pole Vault	U.S.A.	13	1908-68
Men's Springboard Diving	U.S.A.	11	1920-68
Individual Saber (Fencing)	Hungary	9	1924-64
Men's 110-Meter Hurdles	U.S.A.	9	1932-72
Men's 4×100-Meter Relay	U.S.A.	8	1920-56
Women's Springboard Diving	U.S.A.	8	1920-56
8-Oar Rowing with Coxswain	U.S.A.	8	1920-56
Men's Long Jump	U.S.A.	8	1924-60
Women's Gymnastics—Combined	U.S.S.R.	8	1952-80*
Men's Platform Diving	U.S.A.	7	1920-52
Women's Platform Diving	U.S.A.	7	1924-56
Team Saber (Fencing)	Hungary	7	1928-60
Men's Basketball	U.S.A.	7	1936-72

*Longest current streak

Because of the 1980 Olympic boycott, the following streaks ended:

Event	Country	Streak	Years
Men's Gymnastics—Combined	Japan	5	1960-76
Men's 4×200-Meter Freestyle Relay	U.S.A.	5	1960-76
Men's 4×100-Meter Freestyle Relay	U.S.A.	5	1960-76

Compiled by Jerry Tapp

OUR DAY WILL COME

In the 18 Summer Olympics that the men's all-around gymnastics competition has been held, the United States has failed to win a medal, thus perpetuating the longest streak of not winning a medal in an event for the United States. Listed below are the events in which the United States has never won a medal. Also included is the best top 10 finish for an American athlete in that event (a minimum of 10 Olympic Games to qualify).

Event	Tries	Best
Men's All-Around Gymnastics	18	6th in 1932
Men's Team Combined Gymnastics	17	5th in 1960
Greco-Roman Super-Heavyweight	17	4th in 1920
Greco-Roman Lightweight	16	6th in 1968
Greco-Roman Light-Heavyweight	16	5th in 1956
Greco-Roman Middleweight	16	5th in 1968
4,000-Meter Team Pursuit Cycling	15	No Top 10
Greco-Roman Featherweight	15	4th in 1964
Greco-Roman Bantamweight	13	No Top 10
1,000-Meter Cycling Time Trial	13	7th in 1948
Women's Foil Fencing	13	4th in 1948, '52, '56
Greco-Roman Welterweight	11	5th in 1956
Men's Floor Exercise Gymnastics	11	4th in 1932
Men's 1,000-Meter Kayak Pairs	10	No Top 10
Men's 1,000-Meter Kayak Singles	10	4th in 1936
Men's 1,000-Meter Canadian Singles (Canoeing)	10	4th in 1952

Finland's Paavo Nurmi won nine gold medals in distance events.

TOP MEDAL WINNERS

Since the modern Olympic Games began in 1896, 15 Summer Games athletes have won 10 or more medals. The following chart lists those athletes in order of the total number of medals won, including gold, silver, and bronze medals.

Name, Country, Years, Sport	G	S	B	Total
Larisa Latynina, USSR 1956-64, Gymnastics	9	5	4	18
Nikolai Andrianov, USSR 1972-80, Gymnastics	7	5	3	15
Boris Shakhlin, USSR 1956-64, Gymnastics	7	4	2	13
Edoardo Mangiarotti, Italy 1936-60, Fencing	6	5	2	13
Takashi Ono, Japan 1952-64, Gymnastics	5	4	4	13
Paavo Nurmi, Finland 1920-28, Track & Field	9	3	0	12
Sawao Kato, Japan 1968-76, Gymnastics	8	3	1	12
Mark Spitz, USA 1968-72, Swimming	9	1	1	11
Vera Caslavska, Czechoslovakia 1960-68, Gymnastics	7	4	0	11
Viktor Chukarin, USSR 1952-56, Gymnastics	7	3	1	11
Carl Osburn, USA 1912-24, Shooting	5	4	2	11
Aladar Gerevich, Hungary 1932-60, Fencing	7	1	2	10
Akinori Nakayama, Japan 1968-72, Gymnastics	6	2	2	10
Agnes Keleti, Hungary 1952-56, Gymnastics	5	3	2	10
Polina Astachova, USSR 1956-64, Gymnastics	5	2	3	10

THE MEDAL HARVEST

Since the Soviet Union began competing in the Summer Olympics in 1952, Soviet athletes have won the most gold medals. Not including the 1980 Games, which were boycotted by many nations including the United States, the Soviets have won 260 gold medals and a total of 673 medals, while the United States is second with 254 golds and 606 total medals. Listed below are the top 10 nations in order of gold medals won from 1952 to 1976.

Rank	Country	Gold	Total
1.	Soviet Union	260	673
2.	United States	254	606
3.	East Germany	76	226
4.	Hungary	61	200
5.	Japan	58	154
6.	West Germany	50	210
7.	Italy	49	156
8.	Australia	46	125
9.	Sweden	33	93
10.	Poland	32	122

U.S. SUCCESS RECORD

The United States has been most successful in track and field, basketball, and swimming in Olympic competition. Here's a look at each sport and the percentage of gold medal possibilities the United States has won.

Event	Gold Won	Total	Pct.
Basketball (Men & Women)	8	12	.667
Women's Swimming	67	139	.482
Men's Track & Field	215	453	.475
Men's Swimming	100	212	.472
Men's & Women's Archery	10	29	.345
Women's Track & Field	38	120	.317
Shooting	40	144	.278
Freestyle Wrestling	29	123	.236
Boxing	32	143	.224
Men's & Women's Rowing	26	127	.205
Weightlifting	15	95	.158
Yachting	11	91	.121
Men's Gymnastics	14	135	.104
Equestrian	5	91	.057
Men's & Women's Fencing	1	127	.007
Men's & Women's Team Handball	0	6	.000
Men's & Women's Volleyball	0	10	.000
Men's & Women's Field Hockey	0	15	.000
Soccer	0	17	.000
Modern Pentathlon	0	23	.000
Judo	0	24	.000
Women's Gymnastics	0	53	.000
Men's & Women's Canoeing	0	67	.000
Cycling	0	102	.000
Greco-Roman Wrestling	0	119	.000

U.S. vs. U.S.S.R.

The Soviets and Americans have competed together in the Summer Olympics on seven occasions (1952-76). The Soviets have won the battle for most gold medals won in four of the games (1956, '60, '72, and '76), and the U.S. won more golds in 1952, '64, and '68. The U.S. has the upper hand in sports such as track and field (men), boxing, and swimming, while the Soviets hold the edge in canoeing, fencing, gymnastics, weightlifting, and wrestling. Here's a look at the number of gold medals each country has won in various sports from 1952-76.

Sport	U.S.	U.S.S.R.
Men's Track & Field	74	21
Women's Track & Field	10	18
Boxing	19	12
Canoeing	1	22
Fencing	0	14
Men's Gymnastics	0	22
Women's Gymnastics	0	24
Men's Swimming	56	2
Women's Swimming	40	3
Weightlifting	9	26
Freestyle Wrestling	8	17
Greco-Roman Wrestling	0	25
Men's & Women's Basketball	6	2
Rowing	8	11
Yachting	7	3

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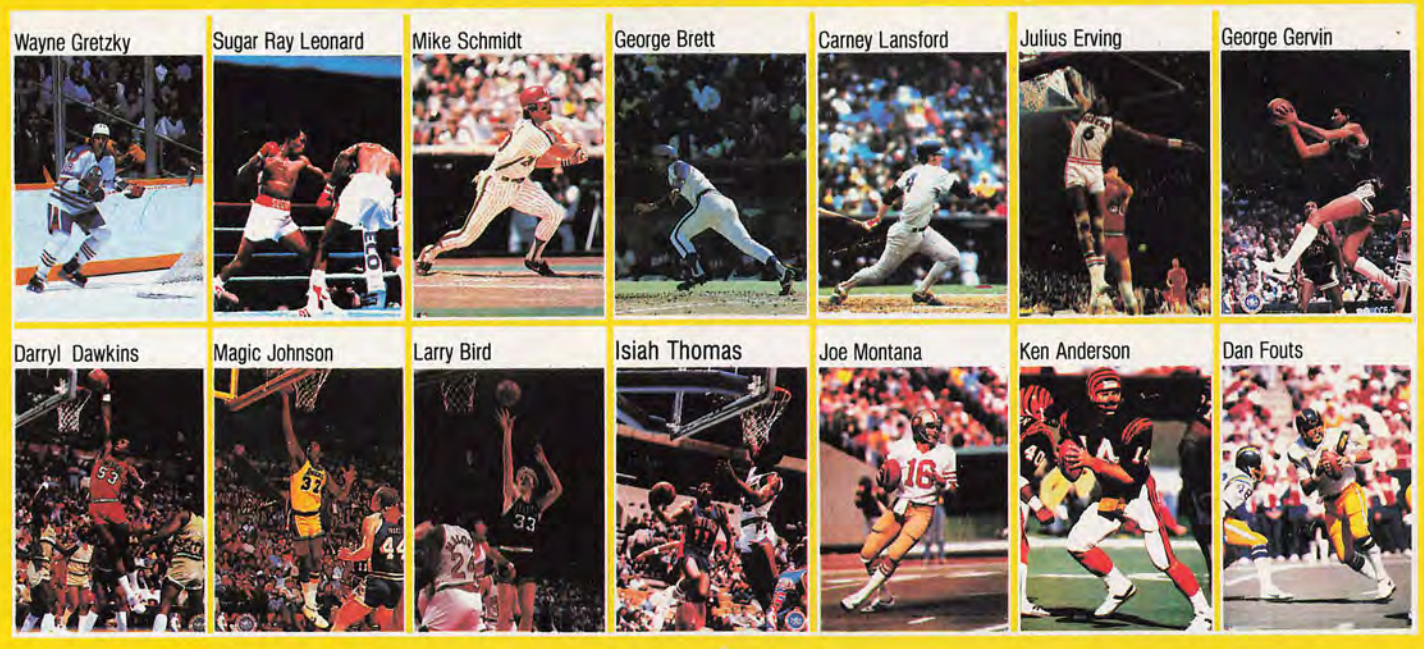

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- ☐ 4556 Steve Sax
- ☐ 4553 Gary Carter
- ☐ 4531 Jack Clark
- ☐ 4545 Joe Charboneau
- ☐ 4516 Tom Seaver
- ☐ 4537 Keith Hernandez
- ☐ 4561 Mookie Wilson
- ☐ 4518 Eddie Murray
- ☐ 4505 Jim Palmer
- ☐ 4509 Steve Garvey
- ☐ 4506 Steve Carlton
- ☐ 4524 Gary Maddox
- ☐ 4547 Gary Matthews
- ☐ 4522 Pete Rose
- ☐ 4510 Mike Schmidt
- ☐ 4514 Dave Parker
- ☐ 4542 Buddy Bell
- ☐ 4536 Jim Sundberg
- ☐ 4523 Johnny Bench
- ☐ 4526 Jim Rice
- ☐ 4555 Jerry Remy
- ☐ 4557 Willie Wilson
- ☐ 4521 George Brett
- ☐ 4552 Kirk Gibson
- ☐ 4541 Rick Cerone
- ☐ 4538 Ron Guidry
- ☐ 4535 Roy Smalley
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- ☐ 4425 Marques Johnson
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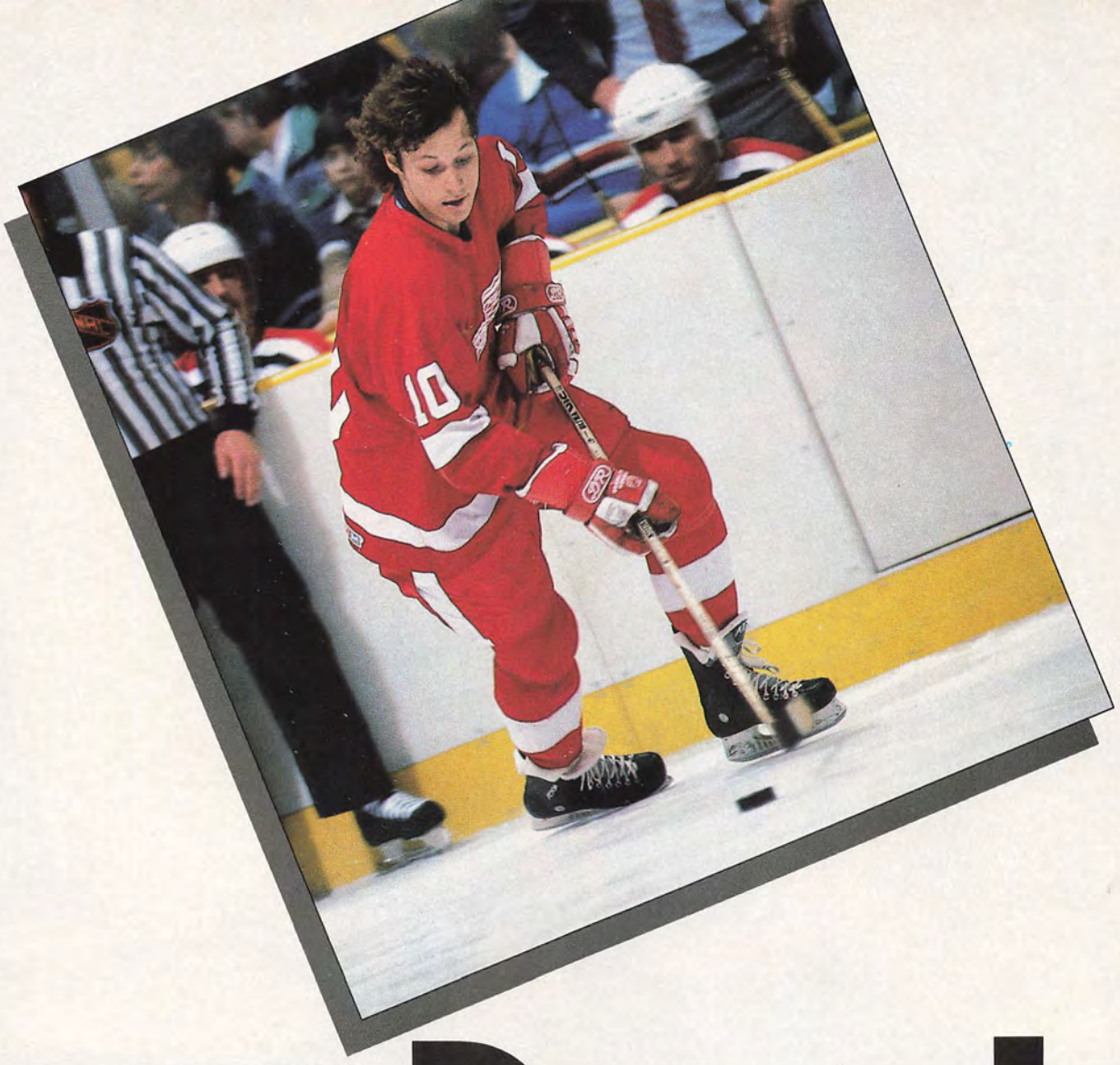


Doogie Does Detroit

Ron Duguay's glamorous show closed on Broadway, but now it's a hit in Motown

By MARK KRAM

STAINED WITH TEARS AND THE sorrow of unrequited passion, it is a torrid devotional, typical of the dozens that clutter his kitchen table. Some ask for tickets, some merely for autographs, but this one wants it all (and would probably settle for anything). She had been his biggest fan in New York and was still his biggest fan. Sadly, he is no longer with the Rangers and (even worse) no longer single, but she wanted to say that she is still his (exclusively). "Well, Ron," she sighed in closing, "things can certainly change in a year . . . " And did.

To get an idea of who Ron Duguay is—or, rather, is supposed to be—witness an item from the NHL All-Star banquet in January: Comic Alan Thicke, noting the presence of womanizer Jerry Buss, said that Ron Duguay sold the rights to his address book to Buss for $1.3 million. Thicke tickled the crowd with that one, but if the stories are true (or even half true), Duguay could have probably demanded twice that. Tall, dashing, and until

Tired of cavorting with the glitterati, Ron finds married life with Robin finger-lickin' good.

recently extremely eligible, he cavorted with the glitterati for six fanciful years.

Professionally, he was (and is) one of the better right wings in the NHL, but the report on Duguay has been that he did some of his biggest scoring off the ice, often at chic Manhattan hot spots like Studio 54. True or not—and he says the stories are exaggerated—if ever someone seemed perfectly matched with a city, it was Ron Duguay and New York.

"What happens is, things get blown out of proportion in New York," Duguay says. "I was never the playboy that people thought I was, at least to the extent people suspected. I liked New York, I enjoyed it there, but I like and enjoy where I am."

Detroit is where he is, just west of Cleveland, and as far removed from New York as Southeast Asia. Traded to the Red Wings last summer, he also traded in his fancy-free luster for a home in the suburbs and a wife, model Robin Bobo. He had hated to leave New York, but it was clear that his career with the Rangers was over. Used infrequently and often at odds with coach Herb Brooks, he saw his goal production drop from 40 to 19, and his self-esteem suffer. He returned to form this past season in Detroit and is expected to be a principal ingredient in the rebuilding job there. Only 26, he should still have some of his best years ahead, even if he seems as out of place in Detroit as Leon Spinks in the Indianapolis 500. Image, after all, is frequently a contrivance, and this is certainly true of Duguay. He is not who he is supposed to be.

"People see me on commercials, they see the curls, or read who I happened to be seen with, and they immediately assume that I am a certain way," Duguay says. "I never cared. I knew otherwise, and so did the people I played with. I had fun but I never let it get out of hand. I never let it hurt me. That is what people should understand. I want a full, satisfying career."

THE LETTERS COME FROM people of all ages, but usually from teenagers or women between 18 and 40. He estimates that he gets a bag of mail a week, and he answers all of it, often with the help of Robin. Seated at the kitchen table on a cloudless day in his suburban Detroit home, he answers each letter with an autographed picture. Clearly, he is the object of intense pursuit, an aspect of his celebrity that led a teammate to suggest that Duguay should have his own zip code. The groupies even write his coach, Nick Polano.

One even asked Polano to have Duguay call, that it was "a matter of life and death." Robin is tolerant of the groupies and even amused, but occasionally it gets out of hand.

"I remember one letter said: 'How could you marry that?'" Robin says. "Another woman kept handing Ron her address and telephone number at a tennis match we were at last year. Ron kept tearing it up, but the woman kept shoving it in his hand. Now that annoys me. I can understand a teenager with a crush, but some of these people are supposed to be adults."

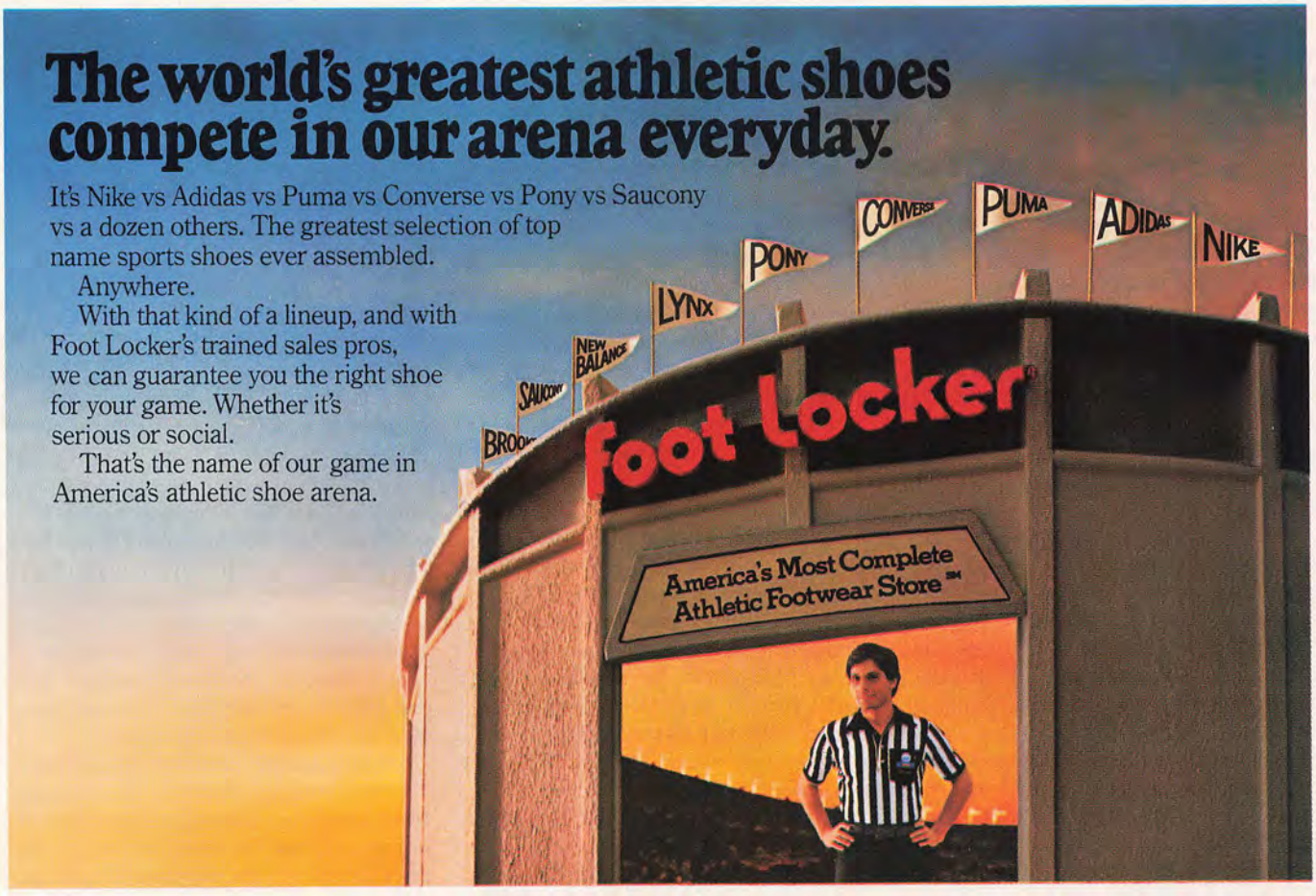
She is 21, blonde, and perpetually tanned. From California—Laguna Beach, to be precise—she and Duguay met in February 1983 in Los Angeles and were married in December in a private ceremony. The daughter of a former pro football player, she had hoped to avoid getting involved with a professional athlete. She witnessed how difficult it had been on her mother, and was understandably wary, though Duguay seemed to contradict her apprehensions. He had a quiet, self-contained charm, a reserved, even shy personality. Add those ribbons of curls and those cool, silent eyes and it is clear why his locker often looks like the Detroit post office.

"Frankly," Robin says affectionately. "I have no idea what women see in you."

What Duguay has, above all, is a unique presence, a pleasing blend of ability and personal grace. Like Joe Namath and Walt Frazier (both of whom had New York transfixed), he shed a wide, dazzling light. He dated Bianca Jagger, danced with Cher, owned a popular restaurant, and drove a Cadillac Eldorado, one of five automobiles he owned. He was featured by Andy Warhol in *Interview* (a magazine devoted to the chic), appeared in a fashion spread for Sasson, and was a pet of the New York gossips, a ubiquitous nuisance that seemed encamped in his shadow. Largely, he enjoyed the attention, even if ordinary dates were often exaggerated into the Royal Wedding. He understood what hockey essentially is, especially in a city as diverse as New York—a business in which celebrity sells.

"New York is a demanding town," Duguay says. "Not only does it want its teams to win, it wants them to be interesting. If it belongs to New York, it is no longer ordinary; it becomes extraordinary. For athletes it can be the greatest place in the world. For me, it was. I did well professionally and had the toys that went with it. I used to see something I liked in the window and I would immediately buy it, regardless of if I needed it or not. I had a great time."

APART FROM THE SURFACE glitter he seems so often defined by, Duguay is a gifted hockey player. The son of a Sudbury, Ont., electrician, he had 109 and 134 points in his last two years of junior hockey with the Sudbury Wolves of the Ontario Hockey Association. A smooth, extremely aggressive skater, he had a hard, accurate shot and was superior on the power play. He was selected by the Rangers in the first round of the 1977 amateur draft, the 13th overall selection and two spots ahead of another New York right winger: Michael Bossy. And while his goal totals didn't come close to matching Bossy's, Duguay developed into one of the better right wings in the NHL. Sitting out the better part of 1980-81 with an injury to his Achilles tendon, he led the Rangers that year in the playoffs with 17 points. He had the biggest season of his career in 1981-82, earning a berth on the NHL All-Star team, scoring 40 regular-season goals and 36 assists. That year, the Rangers were again beaten in the playoffs by the Islanders, but Duguay turned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The play of Duguay and high-scoring linemate Johnny Ogrodnick [left] has caught the eye of many Wings fans.

in another strong playoff performance: five goals in 10 games.

What with the season he had and the appeal he had, Duguay expected to be in New York another six or eight years (or until he retired). Then, just when he seemed at the top of his game, his career suddenly unraveled. He clashed with Brooks, saw his performance sag and his playing time cut. To add to the scenario, the crowds at Madison Square Garden turned ugly. He still had the groupies, but the hard-edged regulars dug in. Robin remembers well how it depressed Duguay. And how distraught he was.

"Ron is a quiet, introverted person, but I could tell how upset he was," Robin says. "It was a big blow. The heckling got bad. I would go to the games and hear it. Some of it was terrible. I will leave exactly what they said to your imagination."

Duguay calls it the worst year of his life; sometimes it seemed like it would never end. According to Duguay, Brooks and he got off to a bad start that season, and their relationship deteriorated from there. Duguay, a deceptively big 6'2", 210-pounder, had trouble adjusting to Brooks' European style of play. Duguay claims that Brooks said he was out of shape and that he did not especially like Duguay's image, that "he would like a bunch of scholar kids, saying 'Daddy, Daddy,' who are in bed at 10 at night."

Brooks, the 1980 United States Olympic coach, says he had "nothing personal against Ron Duguay," and simply points to his steep statistical decline. Says Brooks: "Am I to blame for that?" Perhaps not, but Duguay still harbors bitterness. "Mentally, he destroyed me," Duguay says. "I do not miss Herb Brooks at all." He closes the subject there, but a former Rangers teammate, goaltender Ed Mio, adds perspective.

"Ronnie had an off year but always seemed to give an honest effort," says Mio, traded along with Duguay to Detroit. "He and Brooks just had a personality conflict. Things soured. Why that was is difficult to say. As the season progressed, everybody could tell that he was going to be traded."

And he was. On June 13, he, Mio, and right wing Ed Johnstone were sent to Detroit for Willie Huber, Mark Osborne, and Mike Blaisdell. Not wanting to leave, Duguay took the news hard. From what he had seen of Detroit and the Red Wings—which at the time had been little—he had no desire to be there. The Red Wings were a losing, disorganized team, and Detroit seemed as appealing as Murmansk. Former Tiger Rusty Staub, a friend, gave Detroit a boost, and Duguay eventually softened to the idea. He reported on schedule to the Red Wings and has pleased both general manager Jimmy Devellano and Polano with his "aggressive, hard-working attitude."

"I think Ronnie got a bad rap in New York," says Devellano. "He was just a young guy who liked to go out and do what any young guy enjoys to do. He liked restaurants and he liked seeing girls, but his reputation was blown way out of proportion. We investigated the situation carefully. We looked for two problems: drugs and alcohol. Ronnie does not use drugs and maybe only has an occasional beer or two. He is basically a hard-working, respectable young man."

FOR ALL THE PROBLEMS DETROIT has—unemployment, a substantial murder rate, and too many potholes—it is one of the better sports towns in America. Annually disappointed but relentlessly optimistic, it patiently endured years of mediocrity from the Tigers, Pistons, and Lions, and considerably worse from the Red Wings. Still, even in a 21-44-15 season, the Red Wings averaged 12,923 fans per game in 1982-83 (or a respectable twelfth in the NHL). This season, the Wings averaged better than 16,000 fans for home games to rank among the league leaders.

Since 1970-71, the Red Wings have had only one winning year (1972-73)—and since then, 11 consecutive losing seasons.

Devellano joined the club in July 1982 and inherited what amounted to an expansion team. Formerly a scout for the Islanders, he plans to resurrect the Red Wings' youth—by drafting well and trading prudently. He be-

gan his regime in Detroit saying that he had no "untouchables" and he proved it last summer, dramatically redesigning the roster. He had been talking to the Rangers since the previous December, and he and Polano liked Duguay—especially Polano. He remembered Duguay from Sudbury and thought highly of his ability—and his personality.

"He is an excellent team player, far different from what people are led to expect," says Polano, also from Sudbury. "I am extremely pleased with Ronnie. I never fully understood what his problems were in New York, but whatever they were, he left them there. He is a durable, tireless worker."

Polano says he would like Duguay to be "more physical," but other than that, the former Ranger has brought the Red Wings precisely what they expected. He exceeded his 1983 New York totals in January, seemed headed for a 30-goal season, and won the affection of the Red Wings faithful—an intelligent if beleaguered following. He did not have an especially auspicious start, but he returned to form in December and played well—offensively and defensively—the rest of the season. The word had been that the Red Wings had "entertained offers" for Duguay, but only because other clubs inquired. Devellano still has no "untouchables," (though rookie sensation Steve Yzerman may soon change Jimmy D.'s thinking) but he expects Duguay to be an ingredient in the rebuilding process, a prospect that intrigues Duguay.

"I never disliked the idea of Detroit, I just had difficulty leaving New York," Duguay says. "Last season I was in New York and I was depressed. This year I am in Detroit and am happy. The Red Wings are rebuilding and I like being a part of that. I also enjoy the fans. Detroit is a sophisticated hockey town. I like it here, but I know how hockey is. Here today, Buffalo tomorrow."

HE LIVES IN BLOOMFIELD Hills—a posh suburb a half hour from Joe Louis Arena—but only until the end of the season, at which point he and Robin will move to Laguna Beach. Duguay has done several commercials in Detroit, but Robin has done little modeling since arriving in town. Socially, she and Duguay live rather quietly and are seldom disturbed in public, a pleasant change from Manhattan. Robin is not exactly enamored with the Detroit climate, but beyond that, she also is fairly content. She intends to pursue her own career with a little more vigor next year and see what Michigan has to offer.

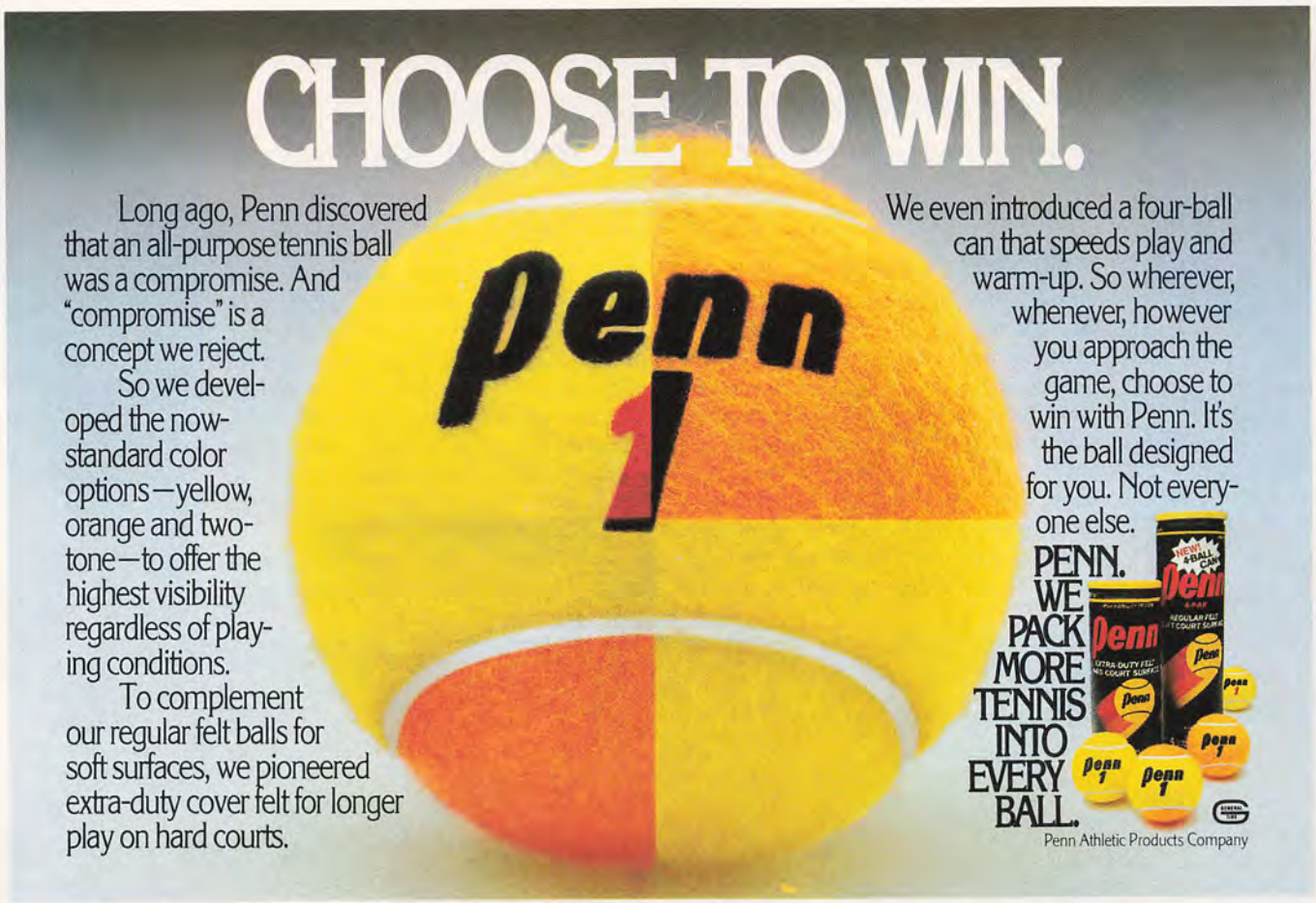
"The pace is a little slower than I am ordinarily used to, but I like it here," Robin says. "I like that when we go out the people here respect our privacy. Ron is recognized in public, but not bothered the way he used to be in New York. So far I have enjoyed the change."

So has Duguay, all of it. A year ago he was in New York. He had his Cadillac Eldorado, the dates with the stars, and the rest of the accessories that ride with being a young, handsome star. If he had to do it over again, he would do it exactly as he did before. He loved New York and still does, but he is different now from when he was a rookie breaking in with the Rangers at age 20 and living out on Long Island with several of his teammates.

"I was ready for a change," Duguay says. "I was glad I had those years. I got a lot out of my system. I think if I had married two or three years ago, I may have looked back and had some regrets. I am glad I waited until I was ready. I like being married."

Alas, but the broken hearts, scattered in mourning across the kitchen table: the address may have changed, but he still has their number. ■

MARK KRAM, *a Detroit reporter, says he knows all about the ups and downs of his business: "Detroit today, Murmansk tomorrow."*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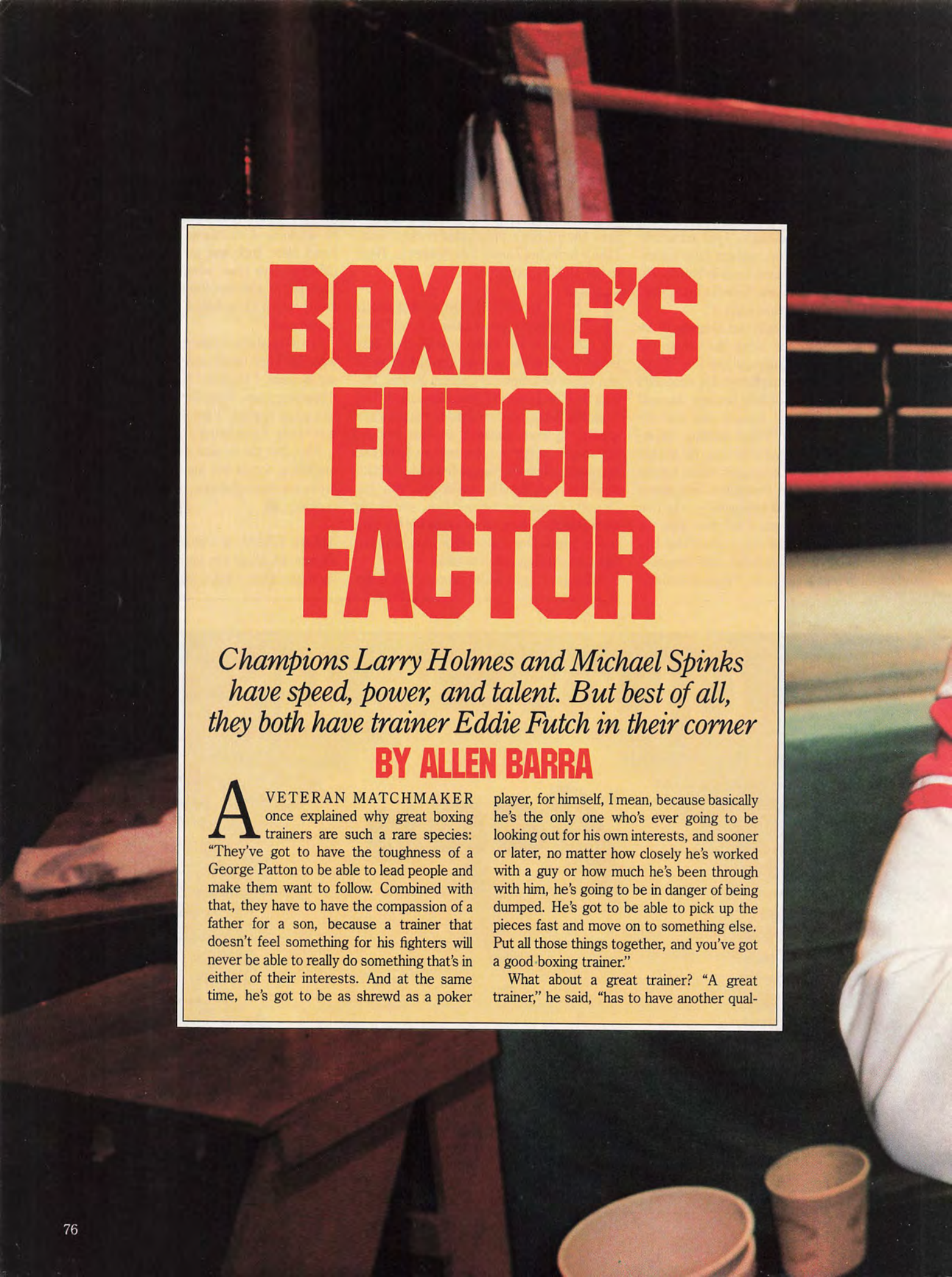


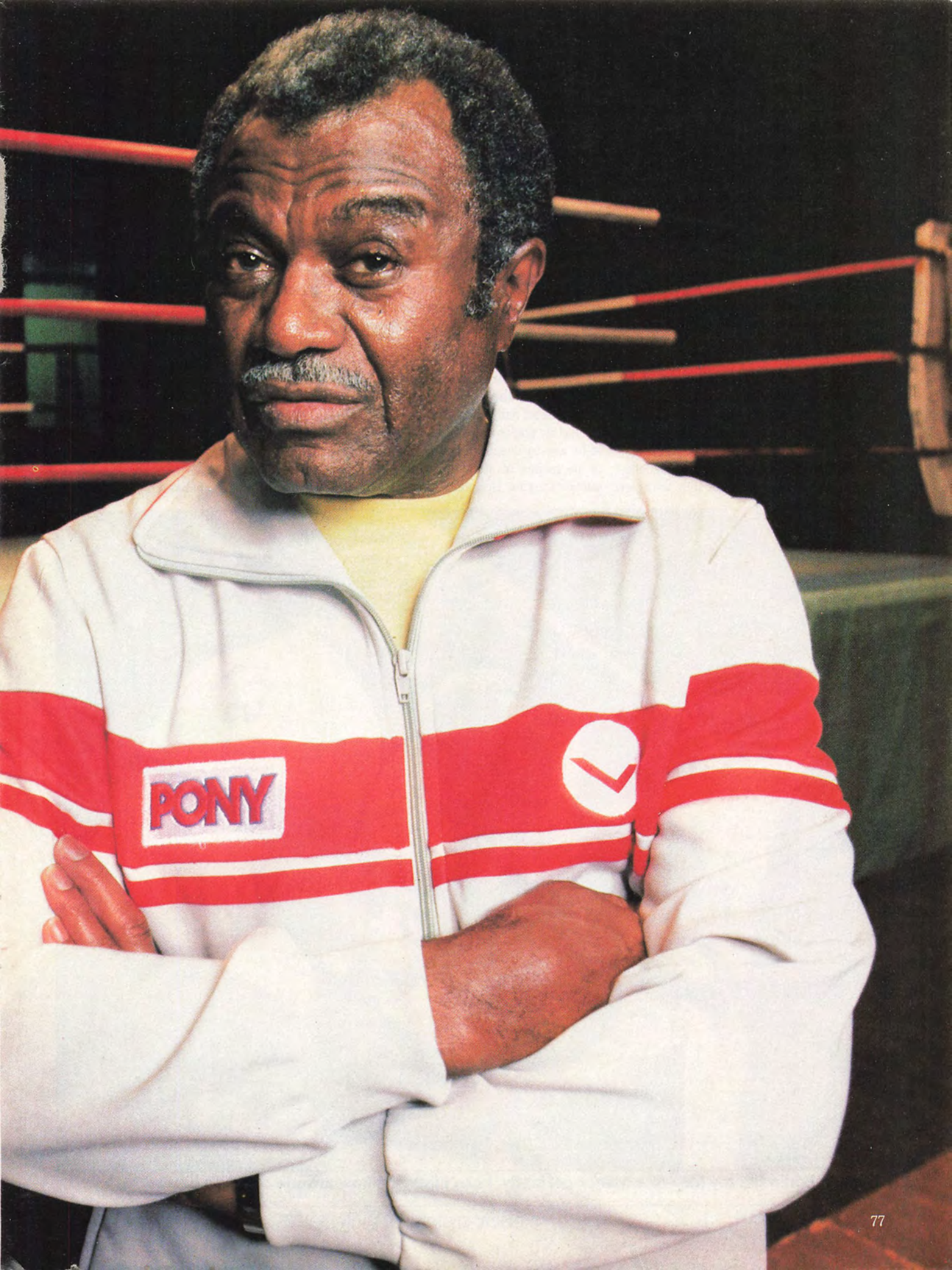
BOXING'S FUTCH FACTOR

Champions Larry Holmes and Michael Spinks have speed, power, and talent. But best of all, they both have trainer Eddie Futch in their corner

BY ALLEN BARRA

A VETERAN MATCHMAKER once explained why great boxing trainers are such a rare species: "They've got to have the toughness of a George Patton to be able to lead people and make them want to follow. Combined with that, they have to have the compassion of a father for a son, because a trainer that doesn't feel something for his fighters will never be able to really do something that's in either of their interests. And at the same time, he's got to be as shrewd as a poker player, for himself, I mean, because basically he's the only one who's ever going to be looking out for his own interests, and sooner or later, no matter how closely he's worked with a guy or how much he's been through with him, he's going to be in danger of being dumped. He's got to be able to pick up the pieces fast and move on to something else. Put all those things together, and you've got a good boxing trainer."

What about a great trainer? "A great trainer," he said, "has to have another qual-


PONY

ity. He has to look at boxing—not just watch a fight, but look at boxing as a whole, the big picture—and see things that other people can't see. He's got to be able to see it in three dimensions. Most people can watch it for years and still only see two."

If Einstein had been a sports writer he would have sought the fourth dimension of the Sweet Science through Eddie Futch. Futch is a relative unknown to the sporting public to whom Angelo Dundee and perhaps Gil Clancy are almost as well-known as some of the fighters they have trained. This is partly because Futch, a man whose intelligence, dignity, and unquestioned integrity have made him one of the most respected men in the most flagrantly corrupt of sports, has never learned the proper art of marketing his own abilities.

But in the boxing world, Eddie Futch's reputation needs no selling or marketing. He is, virtually by consensus of his colleagues and rivals, the finest boxing trainer in the world, a man who has guided Larry Holmes, Joe Frazier, Ken Norton, Alexis Arguello, and Michael Spinks—to name only the most prominent of Futch's recent employers—through some of the most significant victories in boxing history.

In truth, being even the finest boxing trainer in the world in 1984 may not be that much of an achievement. Except for a few men like Futch, Dundee, Victor Valle, Emanuel Steward, and a handful of others, the age of the great fight trainers is probably gone. It is not so much that the new breed of trainer is corrupt or inept—though, as always, that element is all but impossible to keep out of boxing—as that there is simply no longer much need for trainers who can guide young men through boxing careers that might last 10 or even 15 years and comprise a hundred or more professional fights. The once ringwise cognoscenti that patronized boxing have been replaced by a vast, amorphous TV audience that can be lured to watch a fight only through the promise of unrelenting action. Great fighters exist and will continue to exist as long as there are enormous prizes to be won by desperate teenagers with little or no means of attaining worldly success outside the ring. But great boxers—fighters of the Benny Leonard-Willie Pep-Billy Conn-Ray Robinson mold—may soon be an endangered species.

Futch's reputation isn't based on a record compiled in an era of comparative mediocrity. He is a veteran of more than half a century in every area of boxing, from participation to management, and those who know best say that Futch, like Hemingway's great novelist, competes only with the dead. The legendary Ray Arcel, a long-time Futch associate who has put in more than 60 years as a handler and trainer of fighters, says Futch "still amazes me, still teaches me things I haven't seen before." Bert Sugar, former editor and publisher of *The Ring* magazine, author and co-editor of some two dozen books on boxing, calls Futch "one of the three or four greatest trainers ever, right up there with greats like Ray Arcel, Doc Brodus, and Jack Blackburn." Joe Louis is reported to have said that Futch was as good as his own Jack Blackburn—in other words, said the Brown Bomber, "as good as the best."

Precisely what makes Futch so great is

Spinks: 'Eddie fits my idea of a trainer perfectly. I can't imagine how anyone could be better.'

Michael used the jab as a defensive weapon against Braxton.

difficult to pin down. When quizzed directly on the subject, Futch himself is hardly any help at all. "I don't rank Eddie Futch," he says. "I look on myself as a workman. There are a certain number of elements—physical, psychological, strategic—that have to be taken care of before each fight. I'm responsible for seeing that all of those elements are attended to." But despite Futch's attempt to make his job sound like a head butler preparing the estate for a lawn party, the fact is that training men to fight for professional world championships is an enormously difficult and complex task, and that in the more than 100 years since John L. Sullivan's reign ushered in the modern era of boxing, only a few men have been repeatedly successful at it.

For one thing, a boxing trainer must be a shrewd judge of individual talent in a way that, say, a football coach doesn't have to be. Football coaches select players according to type—the rangy wide receiver, the massive defensive tackle, et al.—to implement a preset notion of the kind of team they want to produce. A fight trainer must make do with what he has to work with in an attempt to maximize his fighter's strong points while minimizing his weak ones—all the time, of course, matching them against a particular opponent's strong and weak points.

This is a game of strategy and tactics that the average fight fan is seldom made privy to, but, to those who make their living in the most violent and artful of sports, it is what makes the difference between the label of champion and the bittersweet tag of might-have-been. With the exception of journeyman and bum, there are almost no other categories for fighters.

NO ONE IS BETTER AT THE game of strategy and tactics than Eddie Futch. "He's the best I've ever seen at studying and sizing up a fighter," says the 84-year-old Arcel, "and I don't just mean physical capabilities. I mean his man's emotional make-up, his tendencies, his idiosyncrasies. And more, he knows just how those things match up against his man's opponent."

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Perhaps the classic example of Futch's strategic acumen was his success with Ken Norton, who went from near obscurity to international fame virtually overnight by breaking Muhammad Ali's jaw and vaulting into the ranks of the big money contenders. In 1972 Norton was an ex-Marine with a solid but minor reputation as a game San Diego club fighter who could punch to the body and take a good shot himself without backing up. Futch saw a little more in him. "I had seen Norton work with Ali about two years before they fought," he says, "and I thought at the time that Kenny had the talent to give Ali a good fight. People said he was awkward, but I didn't see him as awkward; I just felt he lacked experience."

Futch took over Norton's career—for a while he managed as well as trained him—with the idea of leading him into a big money bout with Ali. Norton's big test came when he faced veteran Henry Clark in November of 1972. Futch told him that "if you do everything exactly as we planned it, you'll win. And then you'll get a shot at Ali, and if you study him like you studied Clark, you'll win that, too." Norton KO'ed Clark in the ninth round. Four months later he got his match with Ali, and Futch, who had trained Joe Frazier when he handed Ali his first career defeat the year before, got his second opportunity in two years to match wits with Angelo Dundee. Norton, a six-to-one underdog, proceeded to score one of the spectacular upsets of the decade, outpunching and occasionally outboxing Ali to take a 12-round decision.

How he did it is practically a casebook on Futch's theory of evaluating a fighter's weapons and weaknesses, and applying that knowledge tactically. Norton, as tall as Ali (6'3") and with a reach as long, nonetheless gave away—as did all challengers at the time—a great deal of hand and foot speed to the ex-champ. While sparring with Frazier, Norton had developed a Frazier-like crouch in which he used his forearms as a shield, causing most punches to bounce harmlessly off his arms and the back of his head. Futch didn't particularly like the crouch—he thought it better suited to shorter heavyweights like Rocky Marciano and Frazier, who could turn their lack of height into an advantage by forcing opponents to punch downward at odd angles. Since Norton had chosen the style, he didn't try to talk him out of it; he even saw ways in which it could be used to Norton's advantage.

"I couldn't see Ken standing up straight and trading jabs with Ali," Futch explains. "Muhammad was just too fast for that. But out of that crouch he could stop a few of them and also advance on Ali without getting picked apart while doing it." Futch also spotted a chink in the Great One's armor: Ali, like another great jabber, Joe Louis, tended to drop his guard, or his left hand slightly, after throwing a jab. Louis paid dearly for his flaw in his first bout with Max Schmeling, who rocked him repeatedly with right-hand counters before finally stopping him. But Ali was tall and fast and could lean away from punches, and for 10 years almost no one had been able to counter with a really solid right over Ali's jab. Futch didn't even propose that Norton try. Instead, he instructed him to open his right glove and shield his face by catching Ali's flicking left hand in his palm. Then, Norton was to counter by pushing his own left jab—an unexpected move from out of a crouch, but one that a fighter with Norton's reach could manage—not once, but two, three times, moving forward out of the crouch and forcing Ali back into the ropes.

Of course, as any student of Ali knows, getting him on the ropes was only half the task. Ali's famous "rope-a-dope" tactic, which he used so successfully against Foreman in Zaire, was not perfected in 1973, but he nonetheless got a lot of mileage—to say nothing of rest—from leaning back against the ropes, where the full force of his opponent's punches was absorbed by the ropes and not by his body. Futch felt that Frazier had wasted time and energy by throwing looping left hooks when Ali was in that position, since hooks could be blocked by elbows and forearms at a relatively small cost in pain, compared to catching one on the jaw. Rather than hook to the head, Futch instructed Norton to plant his weight firmly in front of Ali and bang with both hands to the body. "At least that way," he told his fighter, "you'll hit *something*, and you'll hit it hard." Also, the body blows had the effect of making Ali double over, leaving him vulnerable to head shots.

Employing similar tactics, Norton subsequently lost two close, tough decisions to Ali—Dundee and Ali made a few subtle adjustments of their own, such as jabbing and slipping to the left more to avoid Norton's jab counter. Futch still insists that Norton won all three matches, and certainly the close scoring—the Ali victories were split decisions—indicates that he might have.

Futch: 'Larry is the most underrated heavyweight champ ever.'

In any event, Norton became a star because of the Ali fights and was soon appearing in movies and doing TV commentary. After his second fight with Ali, he chose to go with new management that he felt had more resources to promote his career, and, finally, a new trainer who was more amenable to the wishes of his new handlers. Futch claims he was "not bitter. That's the nature of the profession; you try and protect yourself if you can. If you can't, well, you have only yourself to blame." But after Norton was mauled by George Foreman in two rounds ("That damn crouch," says Futch, "just doesn't work against a guy like Foreman who comes right at you") he turned down Norton's request to become his trainer again. It wasn't, he says, for personal reasons; "I always have and always will like and respect Kenny," he says, "but I didn't care to be involved with the people who had taken over

his management." Eddie Futch, as his friends will tell you, is a proud man.

TALES OF FUTCH'S COUPS IN the field of boxing strategy are legion, and almost everyone you encounter in the fight game who has dealt with him can tell you one. Carmen Basilio, the former welterweight and middleweight champion recently cornered Larry Holmes at a fight in Las Vegas and told the heavyweight champion about his first encounter with Futch. "He brought a guy up to my *hometown,*" he told a grinning Holmes, "and the guy *beat* me. Honest to God, it had to be Futch. No one *ever* beat me in Syracuse." Which is almost true; Basilio's record in Syracuse was almost as devastating as Rocky Marciano's in Brockton, Mass. Before Futch took a solid but unspectacular journeyman named Lester Felton up to Syracuse to fight Basilio, Carmen had fought 13 times there and had won them all. He was to fight 17 more times in Syracuse before his retirement in 1961 and to lose only one of them, a 15-round decision to Kid Gavilan. Felton was going up against a man who was 17 years away from election to the Boxing Hall of Fame, and he was fighting him in Basilio's home court.

How did Futch engineer the upset? "Well," he recalls, "I didn't fight the fight. Felton did. I just trained him to take advantage of what I thought were a few of Carmen's weaknesses." It would have come as news to Bill Graham, Ike Williams, Chuck Davey, Tony DeMarco, Sugar Ray Robinson, and Johnny Saxton—all notable Basilio victims—that a fighter with such catlike reflexes could have had any weaknesses. But it was precisely that quickness that Futch turned to Basilio's disadvantage. "People always looked at Carmen and said, 'How can that guy punch so hard? He's so skinny.' But I could see that his muscles were wiry and loose, and I've always felt that's the best way for a fighter to be. Guys with too many muscles are tight; they can use those muscles for lifting weights, but they don't have the kind of coordination needed to give snap to punches. You have to be loose, relaxed, for that."

"Carmen was so quick that he was susceptible to feints. That is, he reacted so well that he could stop a sequence of punches before it developed. I told Lester to feint, feint, constantly feint to throw him off guard. You know, feint with a jab, then come across with a straight right, or lead with a right and then step inside and feint a left hook. I won't say Carmen was confused, but you could see in the early rounds how quickly his muscles started to tense up. It took the initiative away from him and left him more vulnerable on defense, because by the late rounds he couldn't tell where the real attack was going to come from. He'd be moving to fend off punches that were never thrown, and consequently, be out of position for ones that were."

SO FORMIDABLE HAS FUTCH'S reputation as a strategist become that it is practically accepted as a truism in the boxing world that he won the most publicized fight in the history of the light-heavyweight division by flying in to Michael Spinks' camp only a week before the bout. Futch chuckles when asked about this; one gets the impression that he might like to let the prevailing opinion ride—it's good, after all, for business. But no, he says, there was no "secret" to Michael Spinks' sound, if unspectacular, whipping of Dwight Braxton in March of 1983.

'Eddie makes you feel like he's designed a training program for you, not something he pulled out of a computer.' *Larry Holmes*

In the real world trainers don't, like Burgess Meredith in the "Rocky" movies, come up with winning secrets six days or even six weeks before the big fight. "A lot of people just thought Braxton was unbeatable—I guess Braxton was one of them—and felt that Michael was too young to handle someone who had a reputation as such a mauler. I would have thought that what they saw in front of their eyes would have convinced them they were wrong, but I guess some people just have to think there was a 'secret' involved."

Part of the "secret" was that Spinks had already sparred several rounds with Braxton some months before and liked what he saw. "I hit him with a really great left hook," Spinks remembers, "and he buckled. I knew he did, and he knew I knew. I felt I could reach him with my jab, too, which was something nobody else up to then had been able to do."

To say the least, Braxton posed a formidable problem, even for a trainer as knowledgeable as Futch and a fighter as gifted as Spinks. But after watching films of Braxton's crushing victories over Mike Rossman, James Scott, and Matthew Saad Muhammad, Futch came to precisely the same conclusion as Spinks: Michael had the power to make Braxton respect him, and he could reach Braxton with his jab.

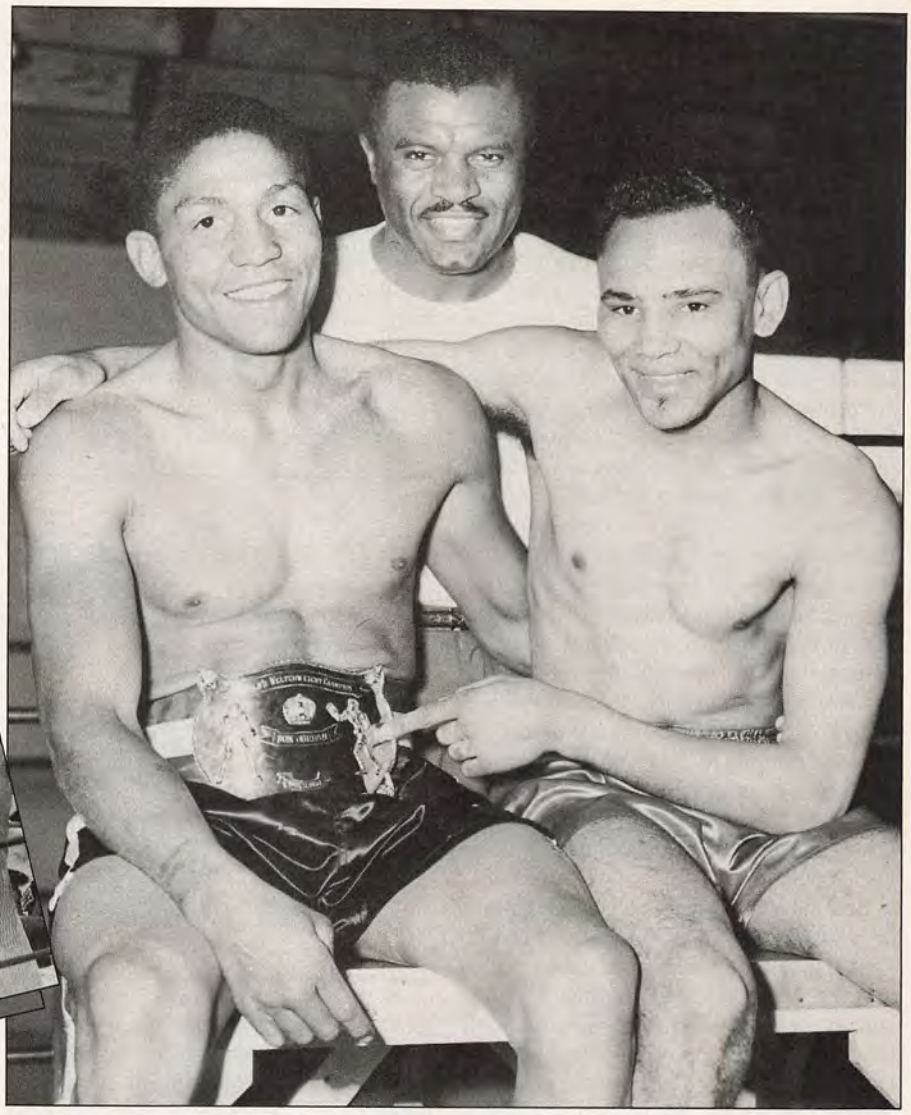
Braxton was—and still is—one of the most unorthodox and effective fighters in modern boxing. Prior to the Spinks fight, some writers had been calling him one of the three or four best in the history of the division, capable of holding his own with such light-heavyweight luminaries as Archie Moore, Billy Conn, and Ezzard Charles (though Charles never actually won the division crown). The shortest man (5'6") ever to hold the 175-pound title, Braxton's straight-ahead, bore-in style of fighting—a style accentuated by his use of a crouch that made him even shorter—had drawn numerous comparisons with the man Futch had trained for more than 10 years, Joe Frazier.

But the similarity was only superficial; Braxton is a superior defensive fighter who is one of the most difficult pro fighters to land a solid punch on. His favorite weapon is a high, looping right thrown over an opponent's lead jab, a punch that had befuddled, intimidated, and finally destroyed virtually every fighter of merit in the division. Except, that is, Michael Spinks.

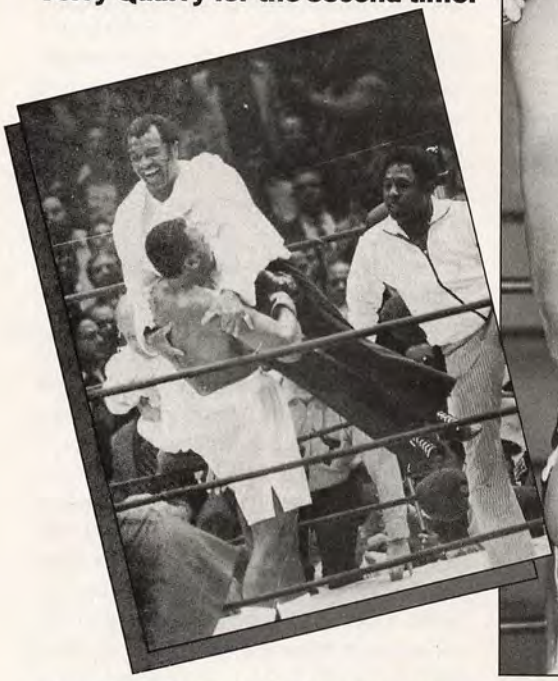
At 6'3", the lanky Spinks could hardly present more of a contrast to the squat, powerful Braxton. A solid hitter with either hand, Spinks is one of boxing's premier left-hook artists and especially skilled at the technique of following a crisp left jab with a hard left hook. Futch reasoned that one of the reasons for Braxton's meteoric rise was his ability to avoid being hit by a straight right-hand punch: the films of his major fights saw almost every right thrown by an opponent bounce harmlessly off the back of his head or his left shoulder, after which Braxton would roll back to his right and counter with his own right, a punch, that, if timed correctly, most opponents were moving right into.

Since Spinks was confident he could snake his stinging left jab through the maze of Braxton's defense, Futch devised a strategy which, like Braxton's own, was both offensive and defensive. Spinks jabbed, then hooked, then moved to his own right, a move that took the steam out of Braxton's right because it caught Spinks moving away from it—in other words, precisely the opposite of what had happened to most of Braxton's earlier victims.

No one had ever tried to go to Braxton's body before, but Spinks found the range for several wicked smashes; no one had been able to land a solid right on Braxton before, but when Braxton tried to fight in close, Michael straightened him up with sharp left



One of Futch's proudest moments came when welterweight Don Jordan [wearing belt] became his first world champion. Another high point came in '74 when Joe Frazier knocked out Jerry Quarry for the second time.



uppercuts and followed with straight rights. "Everyone said after the fight, 'How come he couldn't get off?'" said Spinks. "Well, he didn't get off because I didn't *let* him get off. We had every move of his charted, and we had a countermove ready for everything he tried."

All in all, it was a tactical masterpiece achieved through the joint efforts of a thinking fighter and a thinking trainer. Many in the boxing media were disappointed in the fight, which had been anticipated for months as a brawl between two terrific punchers. Instead, it was a fight best appreciated by those who favor the art and science of boxing over heavy-handed slaughter. In brief, it was a typical performance by a Futch-trained fighter in an important fight.

IT IS EASY TO ASSUME THAT someone who has spent more than 50 of his 72 years at a given occupation must be born to it, but in all probability, if God had given Eddie Futch another seven or eight inches in height, you would now be reading an extended essay on the training and coaching of basketball players. As a teenager in Detroit, Futch lettered in basketball at Northeastern High School, and at 16, he was good enough to play against a team called the Savoy Big 5, an outfit that later developed into the Harlem Globetrotters. At 19, he was traveling with a semipro basketball team, but the money wasn't enough to sustain a family, and when his first daughter was born, he shelved his dreams of becoming the first great 5'7" black basketball star.

Unlike another black Detroit teenager named Joe Louis Barrow, Eddie Futch didn't pick up the gloves out of economic desperation. He had tried some boxing at a local YMCA, but "had no real interest; my sport was basketball." But the Detroit Athletic Association boxing team worked out in the same Y, and a friend finally pestered him into trying on the gloves. Much to his surprise, Futch took to boxing almost immediately, training vigorously and constantly experimenting with different stances and new types of punches. Amazingly, considering the level of competition Detroit was famous for at the time, he won the D.A.A. lightweight championship in his first year.

He also developed an eye for spotting opponents' weaknesses. Sparring with Louis, to whom he gave away more than 50 pounds, Futch found that he could extend the Brown Bomber through a simple tactic: "Joe had a much longer reach than me, but he never made use of it. He looked to get in close and throw short, fast punches, and believe me, he had fast hands. He could punch with the speed of a good middleweight."

But not, apparently, a good lightweight. By keeping on the edge of Louis' preferred punching arc, Futch found he was vulnerable only to Louis' famous jab, being quick enough to dodge most of the longer punches Joe wasn't comfortable throwing. "Joe would make a little telltale sign with his eyes when he was getting ready to launch an attack," Futch recalls, "so when I saw that I knew that was the time to move away. If I had him near the ropes, I could always hit him with a left hook by feinting to draw his right hand, pivoting on my left foot, and coming in with the left. I was proud of that; some guys could hit Joe with a right, but not many could hit him with a left hook. Needless to say, I couldn't hurt him. But it was still satisfying."

For some reason, which probably has to do with the cosmic scheme of balance, great champions have never developed into great trainers. Futch cites Jack Blackburn and George Benton as exceptions, but Blackburn and Benton were black fighters at a time when black fighters were discouraged from fighting for championships. Archie Moore tried training, with limited success; Jack Dempsey, Joe Louis, Rocky Marciano, Sugar Ray Robinson, and more recently, Joe Frazier, have all attempted to train others, unsuccessfully, in their own mold. Eddie Futch might have been the first and only genuine exception to that rule, but after winning seven amateur titles, a heart murmur was discovered.

Futch had no intention of abandoning his second sport in five years. He took a WPA job but continued to work with young fighters at Detroit's Brewster Club. Eugene Toomer, one of Futch's oldest friends and a former state licensing commissioner, recalls that as early as this period Futch could astound the knowledgeable with his insights into the fight game. "I remember when he took me to Toledo to see Archie Moore fight a rematch with a toughie named Leonard Morrow. Morrow had fought Archie the year before in Oakland and shocked everyone by knocking him out in the first round. For the second fight, Archie was in better shape. He really looked good, but by the end of the seventh round I didn't think he was ahead by too much. Eddie saw Morrow walk back to his corner and said to me, 'He's hurt. If he was my fighter, I'd stop it now.' I was surprised, because I hadn't seen anything that serious. In the 10th round, Morrow dropped like a stone. They had to carry him out of the ring. Eddie knew he was hurt bad three rounds before Moore, the ref, Morrow's trainer, and probably even Morrow."

He also, Toomer relates, knew when fighters *weren't* hurt. "One guy he had from Cincinnati was a real cutie. A constant whiner, his heart really wasn't in fighting. He got clobbered in the second round, that is, he *looked* like he got clobbered, but Eddie walked over to him and said, 'It's over. You can go back to Cincinnati now.' You should've seen him come alive; he had everyone else fooled." (If Futch knew the right moment for levity in the ring, he also knew where to draw the line. "You have one career," he told a young fighter years ago who wouldn't take to the training regimen. "I have a new career every time a new boy walks through that door. So let's get back to work.")

In 1951 Futch joined the post-war migration from the Midwestern industrial cities to California. It started an exodus in the Futch clan: Today, one sister, his four children, eight grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren live within 20 miles of Eddie's own home in La Puente, Calif. When he was inducted into the World Boxing Hall of Fame in Los Angeles earlier this year, 32 members of his family were able to attend. He calls it the proudest moment of his life.

The second proudest came in 1958 when welterweight Don Jordan became the first California-born fighter to win a world title. Jordan was the first of Futch's championship associations, a list that, besides Frazier, Norton, Holmes, Spinks, and Arguello, has included featherweight Antonio Gomez, light-heavyweight Harold Johnson, welterweight Hedgemon Lewis, and lightweight Bobby Chacon. There have been lows as well; Futch also trained Duane Bobick.

Economically, too, there have been hills and valleys. As long as three years after he began training Joe Frazier in 1966, Futch found it necessary to supplement his income with a job in a California post office. In 1971, when Ali and Frazier ushered in the era of big closed-circuit TV money by earning $2.5 million each, Futch was compensated for his part with a check for $5,000. He insists that the money didn't bother him: "I knew that I had demonstrated what I could do and was now in a position to make some demands." Two years later, with Frazier his most notable name, but also training Ken Norton and Hedgemon Lewis, he paid $186,000 in taxes.

"THE WORD 'TRAINER,'" Bert Sugar once said, "is the great catchall term in boxing. First of all, you have to define what a trainer *is*. Nowadays, any jerk or hanger-on who carries a bucket is called a 'trainer.'"

If Sugar was exaggerating, in his usual style, his point survives the exaggeration. It's difficult to find someone in boxing these days who aspires to be a trainer; more and more trainers are really managers of sorts, who acquire hot properties and either want to save money by training the hot properties themselves or think the trainer's art can be learned out of a book.

Part of the problem, as Sugar suggests, is that no one has ever adequately defined what a trainer's job is. Is he primarily a strategist or a motivator? Is it more important to spot and develop young talent or to work with veteran fighters? Should he be a traditionalist when it comes to the training regimen or an innovator on the lookout for new methods? Looking at the types of men who have had the greatest success training boxers in the last 60 years, one would have to conclude that a great trainer can be any or most of those things, and that he must have some intangible qualities besides.

Intangibles like Doc Kearns' ability to spot a future heavyweight champion in a western

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saloon fighter named William Harrison Dempsey. Or Charlie Goldman's ability to recognize that what others saw as Rocky Marciano's liabilities—his lack of height, reach, and speed—could actually be turned into advantages. Or Gil Clancy, who knew precisely the right moment in a championship fight to slap Emile Griffith and fire him up. Or Dick Sadler, who lied to George Foreman in a tough fight against Gregorio Peralta, telling him the ninth round was the 10th, in order to motivate him sooner. Or Angelo Dundee, finding a way to get a terrified 22-year-old Cassius Clay back into the ring with Sonny Liston after he was temporarily blinded by rubbing alcohol.

Arcel and Futch used 110 years of experience to beat Cooney.

Or, perhaps, like Eddie Futch and Ray Arcel, with more than 110 years of boxing experience between them, when they pulled off a neat bit of chicanery that might have helped Larry Holmes recover from a nasty foul by Gerry Cooney. Perhaps, because whatever happened was visible only to the few who were seated near Holmes' corner. What happened, according to one of our most distinguished fight writers, was that the combination of the exhaustive heat in the Caesar's Palace ring (intensified by the lights) and Gerry Cooney's ninth-round foul to the groin had Holmes reeling. When Ray Arcel started to fan Holmes after the round, Futch—according to the writer—managed to flick his hand under the towel for an instant—just long enough for Holmes' head to snap back and his eyes to widen. Smelling salts? "Well," says the writer, "it wasn't peppermint. Whatever, it wasn't much of a transgression, certainly not on a par with whatever Panama Lewis had in his famous 'special mixture' bottle in the Aaron Pryor-Alexis Arguello fight. Holmes deserved a break—he was whipping Cooney's butt up to that point, and no one wanted to see him lose because a low blow had taken the steam out of him. The point is how smoothly Futch and Arcel executed the maneuver. It was like choreography."

The real triumph of the trainer's art is not the moment of sudden drama. It's the years of repeated successes due to his ability to hold a camp together for months of grinding monotonous work, in which the real opponents are boredom, irritation, and loneliness. No man can begin to do this without commanding the unqualified respect of those around him. There are those who contend that the amount of respect a trainer commands is the sole criterion for judging him.

It can be taken as a measure of the respect accorded Eddie Futch in the boxing world that Alexis Arguello, one of the supreme fighters of his era, made a public apology to Futch after criticizing his training methods for the first Pryor fight. Daeshik Seo, a Korean-born physical therapist and martial arts expert whom Futch employed in preparation for the Holmes-Cooney fight, calls him "my American father." Michael Spinks claims, "I've known since my Day One in boxing that I wanted a guy like Eddie to work with. He fits my idea of a great trainer so perfectly I can't imagine how anyone could be better."

Some of Spinks' remarks further illuminate Futch's approach. "I'm new to boxing," says the light-heavyweight champion, "and some of the guys who have been around for a while say I'm arrogant for saying it, but I don't like for someone to call me *his* fighter. I'm not anyone's fighter but mine. I don't need someone to think for me. Well, Eddie never tried to do that. He always talks softly, and I've never seen him bully anyone. He leaves a lot of what you do up to you, but he's patient enough to explain to you in detail what he's trying to get across. I know I'm certainly willing to try anything he says."

Indeed, Futch is almost unique in his use of "I" and "he" in a profession where the overwhelming majority of trainers and managers prefer "we" and "us," as in "We whipped him in three," or "I'm not worried. He can't hit hard enough to hurt us." (Though, as A. J. Liebling once noted, no trainer or manager ever said "We got beat.") Futch says "we" only when speaking of preparation, as in "We worked for a month on slipping the left hook." Larry Holmes has said that "Eddie makes you feel like he wants to work with you, that the things you learn from each other while training can be added to your plan if needed. You always feel like you have a plan 'B' to fall back on if plan 'A' doesn't work out like you hoped it would."

Significantly, Holmes says, "Eddie makes you feel like he's designed a training program for *you,* not something he pulled out of a computer. Some trainers I've heard about make a fighter do the same amount of running each day, or something like that. Eddie, if he sees you're getting into shape early, he'll reduce the number of miles to keep you from peaking too soon."

IN THIS KIND OF PERSONALIZED approach to training, Futch is almost unique. Boxing is notorious in the sports world for its Neanderthal approach to conditioning and treatment of injuries, persisting, against all evidence to the contrary, in methods that should have been discarded when fighters stopped fighting with bare knuckles, if not clubs. He never runs different boxers at a prescribed pace: "I let them find their own. Larry Holmes, for example, runs faster than Michael Spinks, even though he's 35 pounds heavier. So what's the point in trying to get Michael to run faster than Holmes just because he's a lower weight category?" The medicine ball, accepted by trainers since before Marquis of Queensberry rules were adopted as a standard

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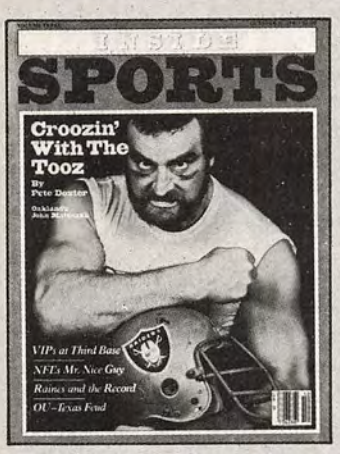

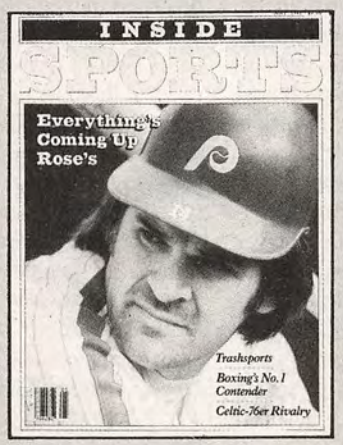

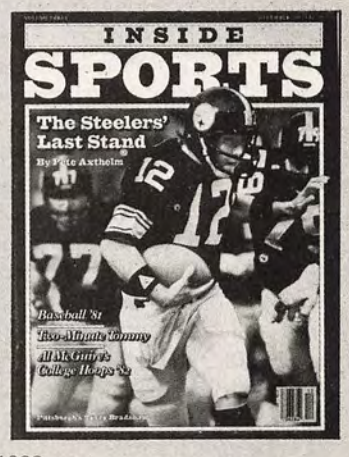

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A

method for strengthening stomach muscles, is scorned by Futch for causing injuries to internal organs. "Why not just do sit-ups?" he says. "You get more exercise to the area you want strengthened without some heavy object smashing into your stomach and turning your liver to jelly."

Futch's most important contributions to the training of boxers may prove to be in sports medicine and the introduction of static stretching. When Futch brought Daeshik Seo into the Holmes training camp in the fall of 1981, it was an event unprecedented in boxing history. Seo is a teacher and trainer in a dozen sports, with a list of credentials as long as Larry Holmes' left arm, but his specialty—static stretching—was almost unknown to boxing. Progressive trainers in other sports had long ago found that stretching aided rather than hindered athletic performance—stretching advocate Bob Anderson had even been invited to the Denver Broncos and New York Jets training camps to supplement their weight-training programs with stretching exercises. But fight trainers ignored the reports of positive results, preferring instead the unwritten law of boxing training, which says that unless it hurts, it can't be good for you.

Seo designed a program of stretching and conditioning exercises designed to prevent the kind of injuries most often incurred in the course of training. In time, he became an all-purpose fix-it man, treating Holmes and his sparring partners—even, on one occasion, Futch himself—for every ailment from thumbed eyes to jogging sores. What was especially intriguing to Futch was that Seo did his work without once resorting to pain-killing drugs or even the time-honored ice bag. Seo's only medicines were acupressure massages and moist heat. Seo also showed Holmes some martial arts techniques for blocking and deflecting punches, lessons that Holmes, one of a handful of great defensive boxers the heavyweight division has produced, may have put to use in stopping Cooney's devastating left hook before it reached the point of impact.

So far, Futch is intrigued by the possibilities of incorporating certain martial arts moves into boxing. He has always maintained that not being easy to hit is the first distinguishing characteristic of all great fighters. He is fond of saying that "boxing is first of all a *defensive* art, and what I teach is defensive boxing," and his list of all-time great champions—a list that includes Archie Moore, Holman Williams, Sugar Ray Robinson, Ezzard Charles, Willie Pep, Joe Louis, Billy Conn, Alexis Arguello, Johnny Bratton ("as a light, not a welterweight"), Tony Canzoneri, Larry Holmes, and a great but largely unheralded middleweight from the '30s and '40s named Charley Hurley—features only one name, Louis, that might be associated with offense more than defense.

In fact, Futch's love for the defensive side of the sport may be indirectly responsible for some of his severest criticism. He took sole responsibility for the controversial stopping of a 1968 fight between Hedgemon Lewis and Ernie Lopez, even though Lewis was ahead by a wide margin. Futch was widely criticized by the local press, since the round in which the bout was halted had only 30 seconds to go, but Futch says, "Lewis was helpless, and when you are defenseless, 30 seconds is a long, long time. I've seen an extraordinary number of serious injuries occur in just those situations. Nothing is worth taking that kind of chance. There is always tomorrow. And if there isn't going to be a tomorrow, well, you're better off getting out of there now before you get hurt."

A MORE FAMOUS INCIDENT, however, was Futch's decision to call a halt to perhaps the greatest of all heavyweight title fights, the "Thrilla In Manila" between Ali and Frazier. It is difficult to believe that anyone who saw Frazier's face in that incredible 14th round could have argued with Eddie Futch's decision to save his man from further punishment, but Frazier has always maintained that he would

'THE BEST I EVER SAW'

"THE FINEST ALL-AROUND fighter I ever saw was a man named Charley Burley, who fought in the '30s and into the '40s. He was a welterweight, then a middleweight, from Pittsburgh, where I believe he is living now," says Futch.

"He was a remarkable craftsman and a terrific puncher with either hand. He was also one of the smartest fighters I've ever seen; he had a number of weapons going for him, and if he had to make adjustments to an opponent's style, he could do it quickly.

"When he started his career he had no connections and wasn't handled properly, like, say, Joe Louis was. By the time he established himself, other fighters were terrified of him and wouldn't fight him. As a welterweight, he was so dangerous that Fritzie Zivic, when he became welterweight champion, bought up his contract so he wouldn't have to fight him again. He knew how good Charley was; he had won a close decision over Charley in 1938, and in a rematch three months later, Charley beat him so badly that even incompetent scoring couldn't take the fight from him. A year later, Charley beat him again. He did everything but knock him out, but *The Ring* magazine ratings for 1938 and 1939 rated Zivic ahead of Charley. Fifteen months after that, Zivic won the title, but he didn't want any part of Charley Burley.

"Charley was poison to guys with title hopes, and they wouldn't touch him. He came to New York but he couldn't get a fight at

have come back to stop Ali in the 15th if Futch had not intervened between rounds. For his part, Futch maintains that he made the correct decision stopping the fight after the 14th. The point, he says, is that he simply couldn't allow Joe to be hurt any more.

When Frazier made his ill-advised comeback attempt in 1982, Futch argued against it and then quietly refused to help him. Frazier is reported to have bitterly resented Futch's decision, but Futch says, "I would rather see Joe's pride hurt than see his body destroyed. It could easily have happened. Believe me, after nearly a decade with a fighter, you know more about a fighter's body than he does." As it turned out, Futch also knew more about Frazier's son's body than either did. Futch tried to discourage Joe from pitting the untested Marvis in the ring against Holmes last November, but once again Joe's fierce pride overruled his common sense. Futch says that watching Holmes batter young Marvis, whom he had known as a child and whose wedding he had attended only months before, was one of the saddest moments of his career. "You train a guy like Larry and you get to know him and feel for him, and you feel relieved when you see that he's going to be OK. And just as you get past that, you have to watch the sickening spectacle of a young man like Marvis on the verge of being severely beaten in a fight that shouldn't have been allowed in the first place. If I had been the ref, I'd have stopped it 30 seconds sooner."

Futch talks of retiring from time to time—he actually did "retire" for a brief time after his move to California—though most of the talk is confined to his close friends. "He told me 10 years ago that he wanted to retire," says his old friend Eugene Toomer, "but I told him, 'Hell, you'll never retire, you've got it in your blood. If you quit, you'll just sit home and watch some kid on TV that makes you mad because he's not doing something right, and you'll wish you were back in the gym again.' Why should he quit? He's smarter than the guys that are training the other fighters, and he's in better physical shape than some of the guys he's training."

But Eddie Futch has no major regrets. He just wishes "there were someone to pass all of this knowledge to, the way it was passed on to me by men like Ray Arcel, Larry Amadee, and Jack Blackburn. There is so much to know," he says, rubbing his chin. "So many stories to tell. I don't feel that I've even told part of the story yet." ■

Despite the fact that he authored articles on Futch and Michael Spinks in the same issue, contributing writer ALLEN BARRA *adamantly denies all rumors that he's a member of the Spinks camp.*

Madison Square Garden. Instead, they put him up against a good journeyman, "Showboat" Bill McQuillan, in St. Nicholas Arena, which was sort of to the Garden then what Felt Forum is to the Garden now. Charley knocked out McQuillan in a little more than a minute, and that was the end of Charley's career in New York. He couldn't get a fight there.

"Charley had to fight bigger guys in order to get work. He once knocked out a heavyweight, J. D. Turner, who outweighed him by 55 pounds! He also beat Archie Moore in 1944, after Charley was past his prime. Only scientific fighters who were bigger than him could beat him. Ezzard Charles beat him twice. He had to give away 10, 15 pounds to Charles.

"Charley fought at a time when it was still very difficult for a good black fighter to get a title shot. As great as Ray Robinson was, people forget he didn't get a shot at the welterweight title until he had been a pro seven years. Archie Moore had to wait 16 years for a chance at the light-heavyweight title. It was easy to duck Charley, and everyone did. Not just white fighters—Sugar Ray Robinson ducked him, too.

"Television has done a lot of bad things to boxing, but there is one very good thing it has done. Today, a guy like Charley Burley would be a tremendous TV attraction, and that would make it impossible to ignore him. He'd get his title shot today. It's a pity there are no films of him to show posterity how good he was.

"I'd have to say that Holman Williams, another great fighter who never won a title, was the finest scientific boxer I've ever seen. I don't think I've seen anyone as good at tying a man up on the inside, or spinning him around, or getting out of a corner. I once had the privilege of working his corner, so I got a chance to watch him up close. He had everything except punching power, so you know how good a boxer he had to be to survive with some of the bigger men he was forced to fight. Like Burley, he was a welter and then a middleweight, but couldn't get many fights at his own weight, so he fought bigger guys. He fought Bob Satterfield—who may have been the hardest puncher I've ever seen—and beat him. Satterfield spent most of his career at around 175 pounds.

"Joe Louis used to invite him to his training camp because he liked to watch him box, and to get ideas. He was also one of the funniest men I've ever known in the fight game; a real practical joker, he always kept the camp loose. Burley and Holman—you never hear anyone talk about them when they mention great fighters, because they weren't champions. But you check *The Ring* record book: Every year they were ranked high in the welterweights and then in the middleweights, and guys that were ranked along with them like Tony Zale and Jake LaMotta went on to get title shots, but they never gave Burley and Holman a crack at the title." —A.B.

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THE GOOD DOCTOR

Excuse my ignorance, but my husband has been teaching me everything he knows about baseball and I'm trying to learn some things on my own. For example: I know when I see "SB" in the box scores that it represents stolen bases. But what does the "CS" mean right after that?

M. T., KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

Cocaine sold.

Come on now, Doc, what was the real reason Sugar Ray Leonard came out of retirement?

R. D., PANAMA CITY, PANAMA

Ray Leonard never wanted to quit boxing. He did so because doctors advised him to take it easy. But the truth is, when Leonard originally signed up with Home Box Office, he thought it was a program that would allow him to box in the comfort of his home. Imagine his surprise when it turned out to be a cable-TV network.

Speaking of cable television, what's new on cable sports this season?

G. G., BRISTOL, CONNECTICUT

There are three new shows planned for the fall. The first, Sonny Corleone Kickfighting, will be hosted by actor James Caan. Anything goes in this sport, including steel-toed boots and garbage can lids. The second new show is Australian Rules Polo, where players get to ride on kangaroos. Best bet for the new season is the quiz show "What'd I Say?" where Dick Vitale and the guy from the Federal Express commercial ask contestants to figure out how many words they used in 30 seconds.

Is the Kentucky Derby fixed? I hear this year's Run for the Roses was what we used to call a boat race back in the '30s.

M. E., HIALEAH, FLORIDA

As far as I can tell, this year's Kentucky Derby did not have any wrongdoing of any kind. There were rumors a year ago, however, that Sunny's Halo had run up a considerable hay tab at local stables and was in hock up to his hocks. He reportedly was seen laying bets on other horses at Louisville bookmaking establishments just before the race. One of the losers of the race, Caveat, allegedly told a grand jury: "Sunny swore to me he was going to throw that race. All I can say is he better watch his tail from now on."

What kind of machine did Boris Karloff drive across the ice between periods of hockey games?

Y. F., BAD AXE, MICHIGAN

A Zomboni.

Once and for all, what are some of the incentive clauses in Herschel Walker's contract with the New Jersey Generals?

M. R., PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

If he gains 1,000 yards, he gets a new car. If he gains 2,000 yards, he gets a new house. If he gains 3,000 yards, he gets a new team.

Isn't it about time the U.S. started doing better in World Cup soccer competition?

P., RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

The new coach of the American team, Lou (The Toe) Groza, is instituting a new strategy designed to make us a world power by 1986. "These guys keep kicking the stupid ball with the side of their foot," Groza said. "No wonder they can't kick it straight."

Does Joe Frazier intend to make another comeback this year?

M. A., LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

As a fighter or as a father?

What chances do the Chicago Cubs have of winning the pennant this season? My friends and I think this is the year, but whenever we say this to anybody, they laugh in our faces.

M. C., OAK LAWN, ILLINOIS

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. Ho, ho, ho, ho, ho, ho, ho, ho. Oh, God! The Cubs win the pennant! Yuk, yuk, yuk, yuk. Har har hardy har har.

I have noticed in most major league ballparks that there are instructions on the walls near home plate: "No Pepper." How come? Why is it forbidden?

R. D., WELLINGTON, KANSAS

To play a joke once on teammate Rod Carew, Reggie Jackson poured pepper all over Carew's bat. When Carew went up to home plate, he sneezed so hard that he had a terrible day and only went 3-for-5. Carew got even, though. When Jackson was in the shower, he poured all of the talcum powder out of Reggie's container and replaced it with salt. Reggie walked funny for a week.

How many goals do you think Wayne (The Great) Gretzky will have this season?

B. O., McKENZIE, ONTARIO

1. Score 300 points. 2. Sign for $3 million a month. 3. Appear on "Don Cherry's Grapevine." 4. Replace Pierre Trudeau. 5. Date Margaret Trudeau. 6. Dress up as Edith Prickly on "SCTV." 7. Drink 50 cases of Labatt's 50. 8. Play all six positions at once. 9. Skip the road trip to New Jersey. 10. Pinch-hit for Andre Dawson.

President Eisenhower played golf every chance he got. President Kennedy used to love to play touch football. President Carter enjoyed playing softball. If John Glenn gets elected, what game will he like to play?

C. Y., BONNEVILLE, UTAH

Space Invaders.

If Willie Mays were to return to baseball, what do you think he would hit?

R. R., PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA

Probably Bowie Kuhn.

Don't you think it's about time for Jack Nicklaus to retire?

A. P., LATROBE, PENNSYLVANIA

Yeah, but what the hell's he gonna do then—play golf?

Publishers are being pretty secretive about Dan Jenkins' new book. In this one, I hear, Billy Clyde Puckett becomes a famous surgeon who has to handle a tricky intestinal disorder. What's the book called?

S. T., FORT WORTH, TEXAS

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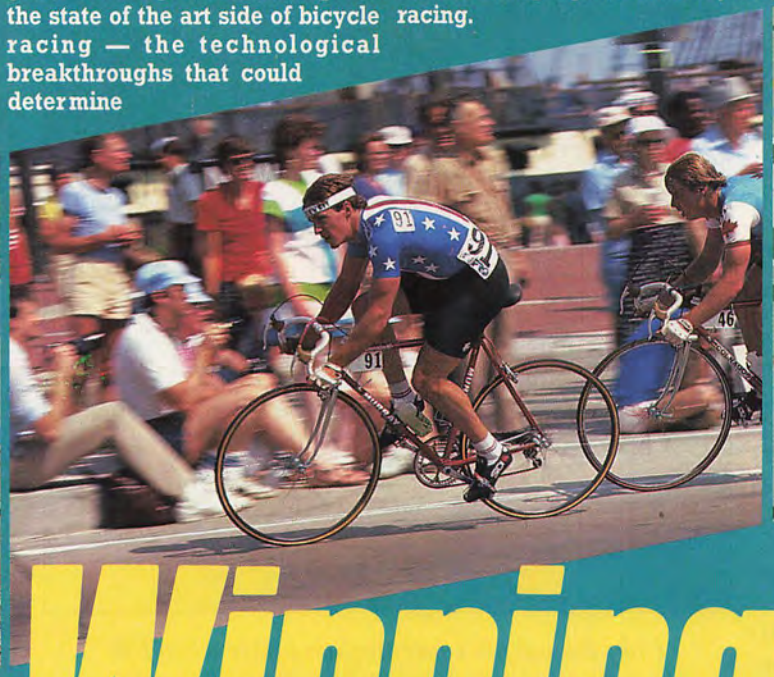

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THE FAN

By DIZZY GILLESPIE

Cool Pool Is Like Hot Jazz

WHEN I WAS A KID IN South Carolina, I didn't have much time for pool. But a pool table came with the house, which we bought in New Jersey about 17 years ago. And since I've gotten my own table, I'm pretty good at pool.

I've got a pretty good stroke. You can have the eye and a sense of direction. You can know where the ball is going. But if you don't have a stroke, the rest doesn't matter. Pool is like music, like playing the trumpet. You can know how the valves go down. But you have to put the knowledge about the valves and the control of the diaphragm and then the lips all together, if you're going to play the trumpet.

One thing leads to another in playing pool or playing the trumpet. The first thing you have to do to play the trumpet is tighten your anus when you get ready to hit a note. That will lead you to tighten your diaphragm, and from that comes breath control all the way up the passage leading to your mouth. Then there's your mouth and the attack on the trumpet.

Remember The Little Inventor in the comic strips? The Little Inventor drops water on a leaf, and it becomes green. And the green goes into this thing, and that thing happens here. Pool is the same way.

The first thing is your bridge, which holds the stick on a steady place on the table. The grip of the cue comes next. If you grip the stick too tightly, it will waver, and you won't hit the ball where you want it to go.

After your grip, you get the picture of the cue ball. You've got to hit the cue ball in one of several places. If you hit it at the bottom, it draws back; if you hit another ball with the cue ball, you'll see the cue ball draw back after hitting. If you hit the cue ball at the top, it goes faster, and then the cue ball will do the wiggles when it hits another ball. Wigglee wigglee. Or you can hit the cue ball at the right top and send it to the left, or hit it at the left top and send it to the right. It's very technical. But if the pocket is to the right, you have to hit the ball at a certain point. There are certain positions you have to hit to make the ball do what you want it to do. The really fine point of pool is the position. To leave the cue ball where you want it to be. And that's the hardest thing to achieve.

To be good at pool, you have to shoot a lot. And my game is really music. I could spend hours playing pool, but I spend hours playing the trumpet. I only play pool when I'm home. George Benson [a great jazz guitarist who became a popular singing and playing superstar] is a good pool player. He came to my house one day and wiped me out. Billy Mitchell [a fine tenor saxophonist who leads his own group and used to play in Count Basie's band] is another good player. He also knows how to repair pool tables. He put the green felt on my table and fixed the pockets, and now I have to call him and get him to do it again.

'I like the intense concentration I have when I'm playing pool. In that way it's like music. Everything that you do in sports, or in music, you have to remember and use on the spur of the moment.'

The most exciting game of pool I ever played was down in Miami. A friend of mine, China Valle, a disk jockey, invited me to his home to play pool. I wasn't shooting too good that day. We were getting ready to break up the game. There was one shot left. I said, "Since this is the last game, I'm going to show you a shot like you've never seen before."

I was trying to make the eight-ball. China's ball was in front of mine. And I shot the cue ball, hit the cushion, and made the eight-ball on the rebound. I was as surprised as China was, and he was plenty surprised. "I knew I was going to come close, but I didn't know I was going to make it," I told him. He said, "Wait a minute!" That was the most exciting game I ever had or could ever hope to have.

I like the intense concentration that I have when I'm playing pool. In that way, it's like music. Everything that you do in sports, and there are so many things to do all at once, you have to remember and use on the spur of the moment. And that's the way it is in music, too. ■

One of the best known jazz musicians of all time, JOHN BIRKS "DIZZY" GILLESPIE *says that, at age 65, he's careful not to break any bones while playing pool.*

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL CARROLL

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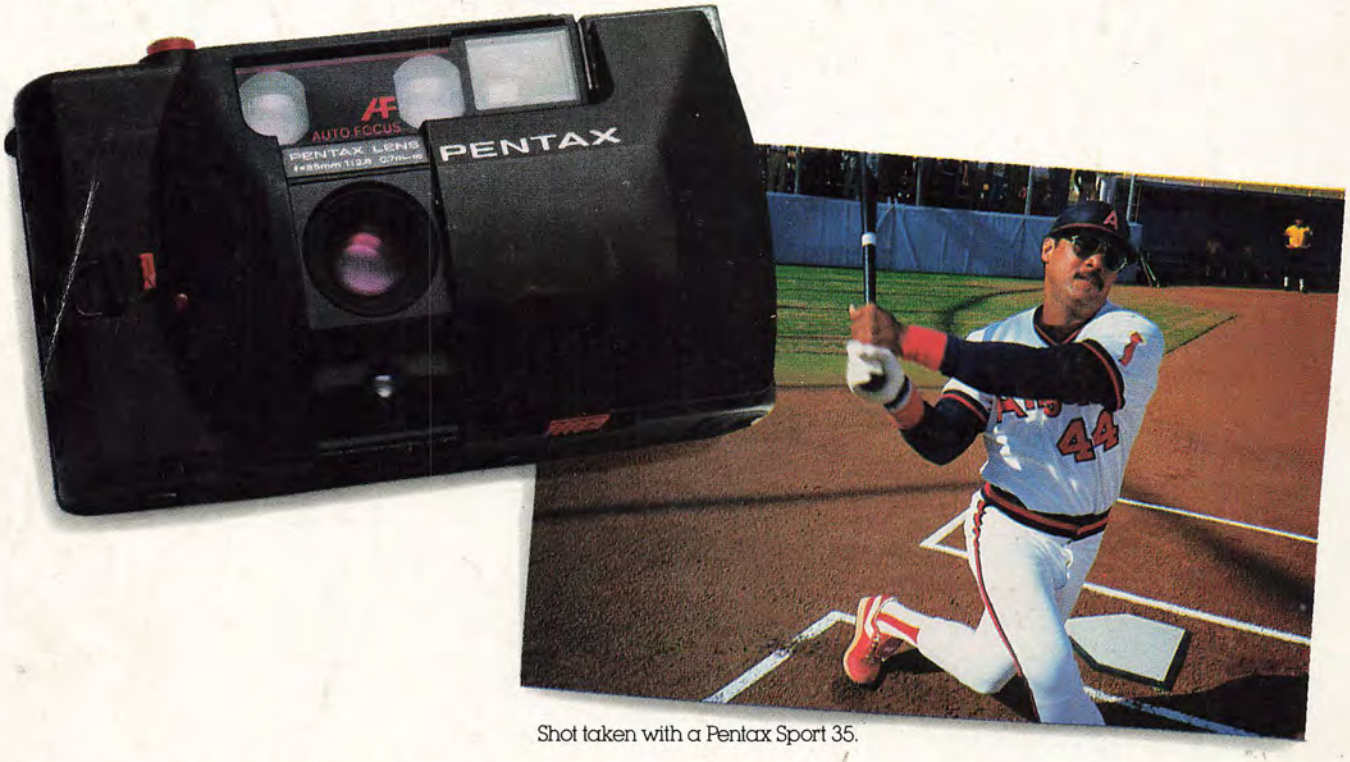

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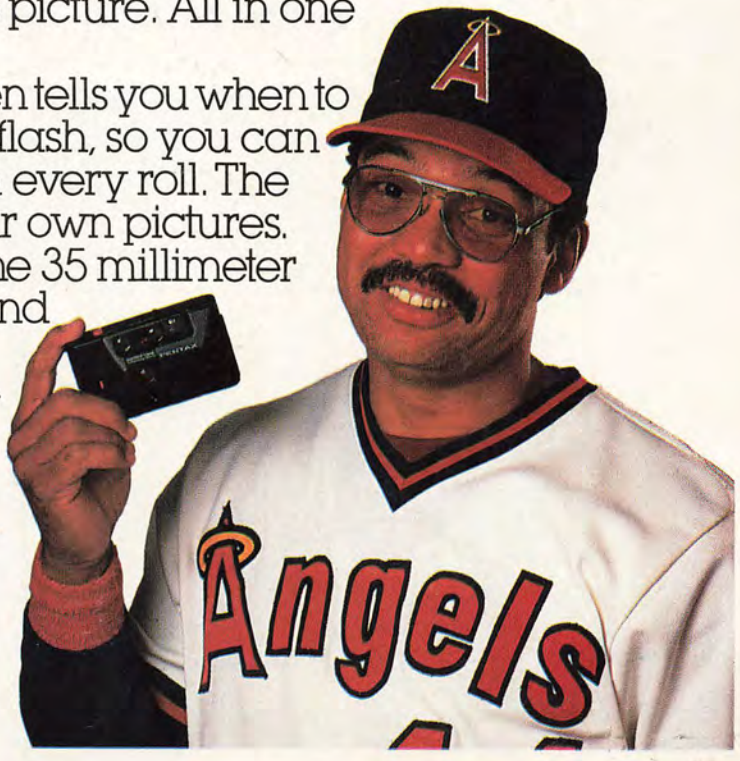

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